PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

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The issue of parental involvement in children's education is of great importance to policy and decision makers about educational practices. I investigated the influence of parental involvement on the academic performance of secondary school students in Lagos state and Oyo state, Ibadan, Nigeria. The research method used was qualitative field methods, including open-ended, semi-structured face –to-face, responsive interviews for students, teachers, principals, and parents, focus-group interviews, and observations of family interactions. A questionnaire was also used, but in a limited way in my data presentation, because of the insufficient number of responses I received from the participants.

The findings in the data presentation of my research project show that the parents who were interviewed and compared to each other were involved in parenting, followed by communication, and then by assisting learning at home. Both the home and the school have a great responsibility to help the adolescent develop a stable character that will yield positive educational outcomes. My literature studies show that a separated home has a negative psychological effect on the emotional stability and intellectual development of the child; and this affects the academic performance of the child. The outcome of my study also reveals that the importance of community and family participation to academic achievement cannot be over emphasized.

Two important facts that support parental engagement within the national characteristics of Nigeria are as follow: first, most parents are primarily interested in activities that involve their children, and they also want to be helpful in classroom activities; still others are more interested

in school programs and practices. Second, in the African setting, and in Nigeria precisely, extended family structure is a very strong component of parenting.

The literature review on the importance of studying parental involvement in the Nigerian context highlights that stress, being a part of our everyday life, thus affects the learning process in Nigeria. This is because the educational environment in which Nigerian students study is highly stressful due to the incessant strikes in the educational system. This means that the socio-cultural contexts of the learning environment in which students grow up and their psychological development are contributing factors that determine student success or failure, both at home and at school. In addition, consistent with past literature, my study affirms that parents' own experiences also affect parents' school involvement, both at home and at school.

These findings suggest the need for the Ministry of Education to organize constant conferences for stakeholders (principals and representatives of Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) in schools, in order to understand areas where parents can be involved in school management to their mutual advantage.

The results of the study contribute to a better understanding of useful practices that can support educational achievement in Nigeria, and that might be supportive of educational achievement in other countries of Africa, such as Kenya, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia. As a project in the Nigerian cultural context, the study contributes to a better understanding of scholarship in a creative and scholarly manner.

Keywords: Parental involvement, school, home, homework, and educational barriers.

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This chapter consists of the following sections: (i) background to the chapter, (ii) the problem statement, (iii) the purpose of the study, (iv) research questions, (v) definition of terms, (vi) the significance of the study, (vii) the scope of the study, and (viii) summary.

1.1   Background

The involvement of parents in the development and education of their children has become a topic of interest to policy makers and others who are in positions to make decisions about educational practices, including researchers, parents and guardians, and politicians. Over the years, the investigation of the factors that influence the academic performance of students has attracted the interest and concern of educators. Educational researchers, including Clark (1983), Ajala and Olutola (2007), and Pomerantz, et al. (2007), have all argued on both home-based and school-based parental participation. For these scholars, "Home-based involvement represents

parents' practices related to school that take place outside of school, usually, though not always at home" (Pomerantz, et al., 2007, p. 375). "School - based involvement represents practices on the part of the parents that require their making actual contact with schools" (Pomerantz, et al., 2007, p. 374). As two major institutions in society, the family and the school are together responsible for the socialization and education of children. The family, whose influence is primary in the early years, assumes a secondary role as the child goes to school. As the child's education progresses to the secondary level, the school becomes more specialized and oriented toward preparing students for a complex society, and the child becomes more independent.

The above mentioned scholars believe that participation by parents at both home and school has many benefits for students, parents and guardians, and schools. The home is very germane and crucial to a child's well-being and development in later life. According to Ajala and Olutola (2007), the state of the home affects the individual, since the family is the first socializing agent in the child's life. This is because the family's background and the context of children affect their reaction to life's situations and their level of performance academically. Clark (1983) posited that when parents are actively involved with the school's instructional program, both at home and in school, there is a greater likelihood of students becoming academically successful. He opined that when parents provide high levels of physical, affective, and instructional support, protection, and guidance to students, the students' educational pursuits become more manageable and successful.

Apart from the home, schools also benefit from parental involvement. Such benefits include improved teacher morale, higher ratings of teachers by parents, moral and financial support from families, and better reputations in the community. Abdul-El-Fattah (2006) argued, based on his research that was done in Nigeria, that parental involvement has been seen as a

mechanism for raising standards, developing new partnerships between schools and parents in the local community, and promoting social inclusion. Attempts and efforts of the state and federal governments in Nigeria in terms of programs, policies, practices, and structures put on the ground to encourage and facilitate strong family-school linkages are commendable. These include the establishment of Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) in public schools (primary and secondary); School Based Management Committees (SBMCs); and the inauguration of Whole School Development Planning (WSDP).

For Abdul-El-Fattah (2006), the PTA is an instrument of community participation in education. The national PTA of Nigeria has as one of its objectives providing a platform for parents, guardians, sponsors, and teachers of students in Nigerian primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions to meet, exchange views deeply, analyze issues, and take and effectively pursue implementation of decisions on matters affecting education in Nigeria with the appropriate agencies. The SBMCs are envisaged as central to community involvement and partnership for quality basic education delivery. Because the WSDP is an inclusive project that brings about school development planning in a way that incorporates the ideas and values of all key stakeholder groups in the school system, it is used as a tool to ensure the stability of educational development at all levels.

For my study, as other scholars have maintained, I argue that for effective parental participation which can lead to effective institutionalization, schools need to provide a pedagogically balanced learning system for the child; and parents need to learn effectively what educational methods they can use in the home. By doing this, parents can feel more confident in their ability to improve the quality of their children's classroom learning experience.

1.2 The Problem

I want to know the level of parents' involvement and its impact on their children's schooling in the Nigerian context. Educational scholars, including Kutelu and Olowe (2013), Ndirika and Njoku (2012), and Ingwu (2010), have all identified factors that hinder effective parent involvement in their children's education in Nigeria. However, in the Nigerian context, a broad review of the literature indicates that few studies have actually been done in this area. Due to the paucity of literature on parental involvement practices in homes and in schools among families in Nigeria, I seek to address this gap in the literature.

Although the school factors affecting students' performance are complex, the search for the likely contributing factors has to go beyond the immediate environment of the school, in order to include the home. The home is one very important area to study, since it occupies an important position in the academic development of the child. The link between the home and the school is the parents, and through their involvements in the education of the child, they can assist the school in realizing its objectives for the child.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is an empirical pilot study intended to figure out (a) what parents actually do in terms of parental support, and what they actually find to be barriers, and (b) how all these map onto the broader literature about parental support. It helped me to develop an effective way to get access to my correspondents and kept their confidentiality. The study was also conceived to seek understanding of people's perceptions of the influence of the home and school factors that affect the academic performance of secondary school students in the Lagos and Ibadan, Oyo states of Nigeria. In summary, the study was undertaken in an effort to gain a

more nuanced understanding of what parental participation in children's schooling looks like for a sample of real families in Nigeria.

1.4   Research Questions

Q.1: What do parents living in Lagos and Ibadan describe their roles to be in the education of their children, including in the area of helping with homework?

Q.2: In this context, what do administrators, parents, and teachers describe as the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children? In what ways is this similar or different to how the literature describes these connections?

Q.3: What other factors contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's education at home and at school?

1.5 Definition of Terms

The terms and concepts involved in this study have diversified meanings and applications. Thus it is important for me to explain precisely how they were used in my study.

1.5.1 Parental Involvement

This was used in the study as the extent to which parents show interests in all spheres of school and home activities that deal with the educational accomplishments and performance of their children. Abimbade (2005) argued that since the entire burden of education should not be left to the government, parents are expected to be involved in philanthropic gestures, collectively or individually. These are in the areas of giving financial support and material support, such as suppling books to the library. It also includes parents' regular visitation to the school, to inquire about the academic performance of their children. In the area of school discipline, Abimbade (2005) also argued that parents are expected to be involved in checking students' acts of being undisciplined, to complement the schools' efforts in producing morally upright youths.

In addition, parents are conscious of some sensitive socio - psychological variables of the home that can contribute to the educational achievement of the child. Such variables include knowledge of the child's educational progress and reinforcement of educational expectations. Parental involvement can be physical, social, and mental. It can be through parents' involvement in homework or in decision-making in matters affecting the school. A working definition of parental participation for this study emphasizes using reasoning and negotiation as mechanisms of parental control, and it stresses that parents and teachers be "empathetic listeners "to their children's educational challenges and needs. This definition emphasizes both the school and the home environment as "child –friendly."

1.5.2 Influence

This is the "action" or "power" that is exercised by one variable over another (Adaralegbe, 2009). The influence of one variable on another variable may be negative or positive. In this study, influence was used as the relationship that exists between parents' involvement in the academic goals of their children (both at home and in the schools that their children attend) and the academic performance of students in school. Therefore, relationships were sought between the academic performances of schools and such variables as parental attitudes and contributions towards the educational process of their children in the various schools that their children attend. The actions of parents towards the education of their children may therefore have a positive or negative relationship with the schools' academic performance.

1.5.3 The Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is among many educational and professional organizations that are involved in the business of public education. It attempts to bring parents and teachers under one umbrella in the best interests of the children. The two bodies, by coming

together, seek to remove the false impressions that parents and teachers sometimes have about each other. In attesting to this fact, Taiwo (2005) observed that

> …. the PTA is involved in a program of public enlightenment whose aim is to make parents and teachers conscious of their responsibility to children and the community in which they live.
> …. in its program of public education, the PTA stresses the need for enlightened home conditions for children, such as reasonable provision of physical amenities and parental encouragement and the importance of enjoyable school conditions for children to grow into healthy and confident adults.

These observations point to the fact that the PTA makes it possible for teachers and parents to work as partners in progress and as fruitful collaborators in the level of academic attainment of the child.

1.5.4 Community

The concept of the community was introduced into the study because parents are part of the community. The National Policy on Education (2004) stated that school systems, and consequently their management and day-to-day administration, should grow out of the life and social ethos of the community which they serve. The homes where pupils come from are part of the community. Pupils are part of the community. Parents organize youth into leadership roles in the community. Members of the community have individual and collective roles to play in the education of their children, in order to ensure their high performance in schools' results. The implied unavoidable mentioning of school and its community in a study of parental involvement in secondary education was convincingly argued by Til (2008), when he wrote that

> community members play a dual role in education. Their primary role is that they are the owners of the public schools. The right to build, alter or even establish schools and to shape their policies is held by the citizenry of the nation. In a democracy, the school belongs to the people as a whole.

This argument boils down to the fact that a good school-community relation is very important for the high performance of secondary schools.

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1.5.5 Performance

Organizations have certain goals and objectives on which activities are focused. These goals can be social, economic, cultural, and academic. It is the extent to which the goals of the school are accomplished that determines its level of performance (Ogunsanya1, 1995). The concern of this study is the academic goal achievement of the children in school.

An indication of the higher quality of output as a measure of the high performance of an organization was given by Mott (2006), who observed that "effective organizations are those that produce more and higher-quality output and adapt more effectively to environmental and internal problems than do other similar organizations" (p.17).

In determining the performance of a school in this study, therefore, the school must have attained a "desired" standard level of academic performance based on what is practiced in Nigeria. Looking at the Nigerian educational system, schools with high performance are those where the number of students with five credits in school subjects or more is 50% and above, while schools with low performance are those where the number of students with five credits and above is below 50%. This level is important because it shows that the minimum level of five credits in school subjects is the passing grade, and it is what they do in Nigeria. It is also assumed that the individual achievement of students constitutes the school's overall academic performance.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The results of the study contribute to a better understanding of practices that support educational achievement in Nigeria. The study also contributes to an approach to research on parent involvement that can address how to support educational achievement in other countries of Africa, such as Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania, Malawi, Namibia, and Zambia. To the field of

education, the study contributes by identifying the extent to which and the circumstances under which parents get more involved and perform more effectively in students' homework.

As a project in the Nigerian cultural context, the study contributes to a better understanding of scholarship in a creative and scholarly manner.

1.7 The Scope of the Study

The study covered students in senior secondary schools, classes 1 and 2 from Lagos and Ibadan (Oyo State) Nigeria, and their teachers, principals, parents, and guardians. Classes 1 and 2 are equivalent to grades 10 and 11 in U.S schools. The number of senior secondary schools included in the study were as follows: four senior secondary schools from Ibadan and three senior secondary schools from Lagos. The goal of the study was to understand the level of involvement of parents in these communities in their children's schooling, among middle and working class families in Nigeria.

The research method used was qualitative field methods, including open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face, responsive interviews, focus-group interviews, and observations of family interactions. A questionnaire was also used, but in a limited way, because of the insufficient number of five responses I got from the participants.

1.8 Summary

In this chapter, as background to the study, I emphasize that the debate surrounding parental involvement continues to be a topic of interest among educational scholars and policy makers. The objective of my research was to understand the ways in which the parents in a high-school in Nigeria are involved with their school. This study allowed me to provide specific information about parental involvement in the Nigerian context and to contribute to the literature about this important topic in Nigeria. An additional aim of the study was to seek understanding

of the people's perceptions of the influence of home and school factors that affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Lagos and Ibadan (Oyo State), Nigeria. My definition of terms consisted of the following: parental-involvement, influence, the Parent Teacher Association, community, and performance. The significance of the study is that it is a comprehensive understanding of parental practices in Nigeria and in other countries. This is an empirical pilot study that helped me developed an effective way to get access to my research participants and maintained their confidentiality. It provided me the privilege of improving my skills in conducting an in-depth semi-structured, face-to-face responsive interviews and selected an appropriate venue for the interviews. It enhanced the credibility of my qualitative research. In my chapter two, I look at some relevant literatures that talk about parental involvement.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

In this chapter on my literature review, I make the case for the need to study parental involvement in children's education in the Nigerian context. Points made are about social class, poverty, education and income, and students' interest in schooling. I looked at the Nigerian educational system and how it is being financed. This is relevant to research question two, which looks at the connection between home and school. Talking about parenting practices in the Nigerian context, it is necessary to look at the roles that fathers and mothers are playing in shaping the personality of the child, which is related to research question number one. This emphasizes the influence of father and mother on parenting. Looking at the impact of family life on educational outcomes, I talk about the benefit of parental involvement in home work, which is related to my research question number one. I focus on homework characteristics in terms of quantity and length of time. I discuss some supportive factors and challenges to parental involvement, by looking at some barriers to parents' active participation in their children's learning, which is relevant to my research question number three.

In summary, the review of literature that directly addresses my study focus on the importance of the study of parental involvement in children's education in Nigeria, the Nigerian educational system, the benefits of parental involvement in homework, and the challenges to effective parental involvement. Mothering, fathering, and gendering issues are the overall general area of parent involvement that my study addresses, and I am presenting a brief summary of them.

This chapter explains theories of parental involvement that are consistent with my findings, by highlighting the theories of those scholars that are featured in my literature review.

Parents have a great role to play in school child education quality, and they must be aware of their role in the development of the school, particularly in improving their involvement in the area of helping with homework. This finding is consistent with Awosolu's (1993) theories of parental involvement, which posit that homework is an essential educational plan that involves many events that go beyond the walls of the classroom in Nigerians' schools. Parents' contribution improves performances mainly in the area of helping with homework, which is an activity that includes finding out facts and solving real life problems that may not all be answerable in the classroom setting. This finding is consistent with the suggestion I make under the implications for practice, that the Ministry of Education in Nigeria should make sure that the school curriculum addresses the practical concerns of the individual student by meeting their daily challenges of life's needs.

The discussion of the parents helping their children with homework contributes to the educational debate on the parent-school relationship and its influence on school performance. This enumerates that communities and families must be aware of their role in the development of the school. It underscores the importance of communication in community participation, as evidenced in some of the parents' interviews in this study. For example, Mrs. Onome, Mrs. Ayorinde, Mr. Andrew, and Mr. Amechi expressed the belief that effective community participation will give pupils a sense of belonging, bring pupils closer to their community, and help foster cooperation between the school and the community.

In studies of Denga's (1982) theories of parental involvement, in which he argued that parents' lack of participation with the school authority in discussing the educational needs of their children is due to parents' low educational and income background status, he suggested that the society should focus on how to help students of all backgrounds thrive in school. This is

consistent with my study's findings, that parental school involvement differs and serves different purposes in different ethnic and cultural groups, since parent-school relationships occur in community and in cultural contexts.

My study's findings, that home resources in terms of the quality and quantity of goods the family can offer predict early literacy skills that include language competence, are consistent with Agunlana's (2007) theories of involvement, that adults can effectively intervene to support children's learning when they develop a shared language skill. The development of language competence and the utilization of language skills, which enable students to keep a conversation with school personnel and parents, were evident from the parents' interview responses of Mrs. Nwokija, Mrs. Onome, and Mr. Andrew. These parents reported that, apart from the English language, they used their ethnic languages (Yoruba and Igbo) to explain their children's homework to them at home, and this has been very helpful.

Kutelu and Olowe's (2013) and Ajala and Olutola's (2007) theories of parental involvement are consistent with my study's outcomes, which show the importance of ethnic harmony through the extended family system that exists in African societies when parents are involved in their children's education. These scholars posited that in the African setting, including Nigeria, the duty for nurturing and educating a child is a collective one, and it is a community affair. This means that educating a child is not solely an individual responsibility, but a collective one.

Given what I learned from my data collection sites in Lagos and Ibadan, Nigeria, the results of the parents' interviews revealed that some of the parents experienced stress and depression as a result of their trying to meet up with their family obligations. This finding is consistent with Belle's (2008) theories of parental involvement, which argue that parental stress

and depression can have adverse effects on students' learning process. This is because the socio-cultural contexts of the learning environment in which the students grow up, and their psychological development, are contributing factors that determine student success, both at home and at school.

Focusing on the Nigerian cultural element, an additional finding of my study revealed that the communal sense of Nigerian parents, who value a sense of oneness, is the determining factor for self-efficacy. This is because studies have shown that parents with a higher sense of efficacy are likely to encourage involvement, while parents with a low sense of efficacy are likely to avoid involvement. This finding is consistent with Adesina's (2008) theories of parental involvement, in which he argued that the dynamism and complexity of the effects of social interactions that occur in the family have influence on the self-efficacy of parents.

A theme of family hood from the principals' interview responses explains my project's findings about the characteristics and issues of parental involvement in children's education. Mr. Famibi and Mrs. Tunji, who were the principals interviewed, expressed that in running the affairs of their schools, they make conscientious efforts to build a community of family that is bound together in one unity in the school environment. One of the challenges they face as an administrator is the issue of some parents being non-responsive to the plight and the needs of their children, which draws on the efforts of the school in changing positively the lives of such students.

The explanations of my findings in the regions I studied in Nigeria, which are consistent with the literature, is that parents actively intervene in structuring students' learning at home. The interview responses of Mr. Amechi and Mrs. Amara illustrated this finding when they explained that their children discuss the challenges they face at school with them on a regular

basis, and they give great support to them by scrutinizing the television programs they watch at home.

Finally, in this section, my last finding is that parental involvement is a very important area of research and practice among families in Nigeria. What explains this finding is the fact that the study was undertaken in an effort to gain an understanding of what parental participation in children's schooling looks like in Ibadan and Lagos states, Nigeria. A few additional research studies that turned out to be relevant to my study's findings that I was not aware of previously were as follows: Akinboye's (2005), Amanchukwu's (2011), Akpan's (2014), Banjo's (2009), and Chacko's (2004) studies.

2.1 Importance of Parental Involvement in Children's Education in the Nigerian Context

Differing definitions of parental involvement have been described in the literature. A working definition of parental involvement for this study emphasizes using reasoning and negotiation as a mechanism of parental control, and it stresses that parents and teachers be "empathetic listeners" to their children's educational challenges and needs. This definition emphasizes both the school and the home environment as "child - friendly."

Some of the findings of the major research on parental involvement (Ajala & Olutola, 2007; Ajayi, et al., 2009; Ingwu, 2010; Kutelu & Olowe, 2013; Amao, et al., 2013) have emphasized that the child's first place of contact with the world is the family. The child, as a result, acquires initial education and socialization from parents and other significant persons in the family. The parents are, in short, the child's first teachers. They are the first and primary source of social support for young children.

Kutelu and Olowe (2013) in their studies argued that in the African setting the responsibility for raising a child is a collective one. From the Nigerian perspective, a family

consists of not only a father, a mother, and children, but also includes a host of aunts, uncles, grand-parents, and even long-standing friends, all of whom are described as the extended family. Kutelu and Olowe (2013) further argued that extended family life is still an African reality. Our culture embraces strong family life, based on a long existing tradition which puts children and their care as a top priority. Family education based on our culture and tradition is a common characteristic of African settings, especially in Nigerian culture. This shows the importance of cultural unity that exists in African communities when parents are involved in their children's education. Ajayi, et al. (2009) reiterated that when parents are involved in the education of their children, the children tend to model their parents' attitudes and actions. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, they do better in schooling. They develop good work habits and lifelong learning skills, such as time management, organization, persistence, and self- responsibility. Suffice it to say that parents exert profound influence on every aspect of a child's life.

The argument that comes with research question one explains the roles of parents in their children's education, including the area of helping with homework. The argument raises the following questions: Is the role of parents in the education of their children in Nigeria of vital importance? How effective is the role of parents in helping their children with their homework?

Parents have a great role to play in school/child education quality. Awosolu (1993) posited that home work is a very important learning strategy that entails a lot of activities that go beyond the walls of the classroom. Parents' participation enhances performance, particularly in the area of helping children with their homework. The importance of parents' participation for quality education in the secondary schools in Nigeria at any given time cannot be over emphasized, since the home is very indispensable for children's development in life. Positive

parental involvement, starting from the beginning of their children's lives and continuing on to the secondary schools, needs to be encouraged so that children's education is improved. Studies of Denga (1982) showed that low income families are less involved in their children's education, and because of this lack of participation, their children are less likely to be successful in school. Considering this statement, the society should focus on how to alleviate some of the stress in the lives of these families, and how to help students of all backgrounds thrive in school.

The concept of workshops should be established to develop the relationship between parents and their children. Workshops can help parents of lower income and of less privileged educational background learn how to help their children succeed in school. Such programs not only help parents learn how to teach their children; they also put emphasis on the importance of parental involvement in the school system. This argument is in accordance with what the literature says.

The argument that comes to mind with regard to research question two seeks to find out what administrators, parents, and teachers describe as the connection between home and school, and how this connection is different from what the literature says. The argument raises the following question: Do administrators, parents, and teachers describe this connection similarly or differently?

Comparing the connection between the Nigerian administrators, teachers, and parents with the way the literature describes it, Kutelu and Olowe (2013) argued that in the African setting, the responsibility for raising a child is a collective one. In addition, Ajala and Olutola (2007) also argued that in the Nigerian context, it is believed that the child's first place of contact is the family. As a result of this, initial education is provided by the parents and other significant persons in the family before the children attend formal schooling.

Parents in Nigeria interact with the school authority during PTA meetings. These meetings are a forum where parents, teachers, and school administrators meet to discuss students' affairs. Visiting days are also set out for parents to visit their children in school and to meet with their respective class teachers. These class teachers present the child's education progress chart to their parents, and they discuss the progress of the child with the parents, which gives the parents ample opportunity to explain to the teachers their children's problems. Based on these complaints, necessary corrections are made.

The teachers' views about parents' intervention are a welcome development in the Nigerian educational system. The administrators also encourage parents to interact with their children's teachers, in order for the teachers to listen to the parents' complaints and deal with them accordingly. The interaction between the teachers, parents, and administrators is the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children. These submissions are in line with the way the literature describes it.

Research question three examines other factors that contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's education, both at home and at school. Several factors affect high and low parental involvement in children's education, both at home and in school. Among these factors are parental stress and depression, parents' positive sense of efficacy, parents' own experience, and the education of parents.

The argument that comes to mind with regards to the above research question is this: Does stress, parental education, and parents' own experience affect the involvement of parents in the education of their children?

Agunlanna (2007) argued that the education that children receive in Nigeria is very much dependent on the education that their parents received. It is true that parents who have gone

beyond the secondary school education in Nigeria have been found to be more involved with their children than those who do not complete secondary school.

Stress is another vital factor which affects the involvement of parents in the education of their children. Many less educated parents simply have more unmanaged stress in their lives. This stress interacts with their ability and opportunity to interact with their child. Parents who have finished secondary schools and have gone further to receive additional schooling in Nigeria understand the pressure and stress of school. Parents who have completed levels of higher education are more involved in their children's education. Mothers' education especially has a significant impact on their children's learning process.

A parent's sense of efficacy, which explains their belief and confidence in their ability to contribute positively to their children's learning, is also another factor that contributes to parental involvement in secondary schools in Nigeria. While a parent's sense of efficacy and parental education have a high level of influence on parental involvement in the education of their children, stress has a low influence on parental involvement in children's education. The submissions above are in line with research question three.

Here are some of the factors affecting parental involvement in children's education that are especially important in the Nigerian context:

2.1.1 Social Class

Several researchers and scholars in the sociology of education, including J.O. Ogunlade (1981), D.I. Denga (1982), Ali Mburza (2000), and Emmanuel Ingwu (2010), have found that parental involvement in education often relates to social class position, in terms of both how class shapes world views and how class affects economic and educational resources. These scholars have shown that the educational and socio-economic backgrounds of parents play a

decisive role in the formation of student attitudes and habits toward school. Looking at how the factor of socio-economic status influences the impact of parental involvement in children's education among Nigerian families, Denga (1982) observed that it is true that social class does have a powerful impact in shaping the daily rhythms of family life in Nigeria. There is a wide socio-economic gap between middle class families and working class families, due to the differences in their status. Middle class families possess social capital, which is a contributing factor to a child's success. They also have cultural capital, such as networking with other parents and making contact with school personnel, which helps them further understand the schooling process. In defining the concepts of social and cultural capital, DiMaggio Paul (1982) defined cultural capital as institutionalized, widely-shared, high status cultural signals used for social and cultural exclusion. Examples of these signals include preferences, goods, credentials, and behaviors. Social capital refers to the collective value of all social networks, and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other.

The particular concerns of the above mentioned authors are that middle class parents of students in senior secondary schools see themselves as having an integral role, together with the school, in educating their children, which is not a common viewpoint among working class Nigerian families. Because middle class families are much more involved in their children's school activities than working class families, they assertively intervene in their children's situations and are often very interventionist. They talk to the school authorities about any problem in relation to their child's performance in school. Working class and poor parents seem to be more passive in their own intervening process. In working class families, parents' greater involvement with the child is limited, due to their genuine lack of understanding of institutional procedures. Imber-Black (1988), in his work *Families and Larger Systems: A Family Therapist's*

Guide through the Labyrinth, also argued that these working class parents are probably aware that larger systems and institutions are often carriers of unexamined negative attitudes toward ethnic minorities and the poor. Apart from working class parents' lack of understanding of the schooling process, there are a number of reasons for these constraints, but I focus on the high level of poverty among working class parents in Nigerian families in the next section.

I talk about Basil Bernstein (1961) because his views on child rearing practices had a very important influence in the early 1970s, especially with his book, *The Logic of Non-standard English* (1971). In Basil Bernstein's (1961) view on child- rearing techniques, middle-class life is oriented to the values of order, rationality, stability, planning for long-range goals, and the control of emotion. The child in a middle-class home is encouraged to verbalize emotions, to control them, and to try to understand emotions rationally. Bernstein believed that middle-class parents tend to impose discipline by verbal means, rather than by physical punishment, to explain why an act was an infraction and why it must be disciplined, and to explore the child's motivation. Through exposure to these child-rearing practices, the middle-class child is seen to develop superior abilities to reason abstractly and to engage in intellectual activity (p. 101), while the lower-class child experiences ineffectual learning strategies because he or she may not be well-equipped with the learning sets required for a systematic approach to the analysis of problems. Bernstein (1961) theorized that lower-class parents do not present the child with an ordered, planned, and rational system of living.

2.1.2 Poverty

As I have already argued in the preceding section, working class parents, whose standard of living is very low, lack the means they need to participate in the schooling of their children, unlike affluent parents, whose children have a sense of entitlement necessary to navigate the

school system. This idea corroborates with the views of researchers like Lareau (1987), who noted that across social classes, individuals vary in the degree to which they activate cultural capital. There are differences in the degree to which parents of different social classes intervene in the educational system. Upper middle class parents have resources which allow them to advance their children's school careers and which are not available to working class parents. These resources include educational competence, class position, income and material resources, and social networks.

In the Nigerian context, where I grew up, although it is true that middle class parents are much more involved in their children's education, it is equally true that working-class families do value education as highly as middle-class families. However, working class families do not have as much social and cultural capital as middle class families have. For example, in terms of the educational and income levels of parents, Emmanuel Ingwu (2010) argued that working class parents do not have the capacity to build bridges out of poverty and to benefit from the better quality of life which they wish to extend to their children, due to their own lack of education, which indirectly also does not give them opportunities for higher income. Working class parents find it difficult to have structured activities for their children, unlike middle and high social economic status parents, mostly because they are busy working in either two or three jobs to meet the family's needs, which also limits the time they have to help their children with homework.

Poverty at the family level affects demand for education and hinders effective participation in the education process. People living in poor neighborhoods tend to be more isolated from their schools than people in more well off neighborhoods. Therefore, poverty reduction programs that raise people's incomes and offer them choices enhance the capacity of

homes to promote both the status and process variables that make the home a better partner of the school. In summary, reducing poverty and empowering people to raise their own living standards and to improve living conditions would help in ensuring improved collaboration between the home and the school to promote the type of synergetics emphasized in this discussion.

2.1.3 Education and Income

Studies have found a correlation between parent educational level and income and student achievement. Okantey (2006) established in his studies that the educational levels of parents, as well as their income, are powerful factors influencing the educational attainment and academic success of their children, especially in the area of homework support by parents. This is because for him, parental education, which leads to good income, empowers parents to give their children a solid foundation for school, and it enables them to build strong partnerships with schools in order to sustain their children's achievement standards. This section is relevant to my study's goals about parents' involvement in their children's learning, and to my research questions one and two, which look at the roles of parents in their children's education and the connection of the parents to the schools which their children attend. Educated parents have increased emphasis on educational excellence, Okantey (2006) reiterated in his studies. He argued that educated parents tend to show more concern for their children's poor performance at school, either by teaching them in those subjects in which they perform poorly or by appointing lesson teachers to coach them further.

Although Okantey's (2006) research seems to imply that educated parents show more concerns than working class parents in improving their children's poor educational performance, this still does not remove the fact that there are no value differences between middle and working

class parents about the importance of education for their children, as Denga (1982) has argued. The argument is that, just like Lareau (1987) has said, parents vary in the degree to which they can activate cultural capital, and so there are differences in the degree to which parents can effectively intervene in the educational system, despite showing the value of education for their children.

Matanmi's research (2006) has shown that the academic aspirations of school children are positively related to the social standing of their parents. This is so because children tend to imitate their parents and so aspire to be as highly educated as their parents. Among the elites in Nigeria, the tendency for children to pursue the occupation of their parents may be strong. However, among the less-privileged, the tendency may be for children to aspire to occupational levels higher than those of their parents. This does mean that a working class child's level of occupational preference may be influenced by the work his or her parents do. Okon (1981) argued that the type of work that parents do and what they believe about work, their values, and their socio-economic level influence a child's occupational development. He suggested that the education levels of parents can influence their knowledge, beliefs, and aspirations about childrearing, which can contribute to a variety of parental behaviors that may directly or indirectly relate to educational outcomes.

For Okon (1981), parents who model behaviors that are conducive to positive educational outcomes can instill habits in their children that are deeply rooted in the process of socialization, in which learning through observation of behavior is a central form. Students whose parents have high education levels may have greater aspirations for learning, and children's aspirations and expectations can also influence their parents. Students of parents with high education levels may have access to more effective learning strategies than are available from parents with lower

education levels. Thus, educated parents are equipped by virtue of their education to take cognizance of the fact that the parent-student-school community relationship is important in order to promote the educational attainment and academic achievement of their children, especially in the area of schools in supporting parents to help their children with homework. This point further elaborates the activation of cultural capital, which does not necessarily negate the value-equal point of the importance of education to both middle and working class parents in Nigerian families.

2.1.4 Students' Interest in Schooling

This is another reason why parental involvement in children's education is an important subject of study in the Nigerian context. This section is relevant to my study's goals and my research question two, which examines the relation between home and school, because this piece discusses home and school factors as the reasons in the decline in students' motivation to learn. The term "interest" can be viewed as a type of feeling that describes whatever we engage in as being worthwhile (Makinde, 2010, p. 14). This feeling of worthwhileness makes us pay attention to that activity and thus engage in it most of the time. The place of interest in students' schooling is underscored by the fact that when students engage in whatever they are keenly interested in, all obstacles they face along that line would look surmountable because the worthwhileness in that act fuels their energy and keeps them going. This "worthwhileness" corroborates with the "enduring- predisposition" that Krappa (2000) emphasized when he said that individual interest has been hypothesized to be a relatively enduring predisposition to attend to certain activities, and it is associated with positive affect, persistence, and learning.

Olatoye's (2004) studies have shown that there can also be a decline in students' motivation to learn due to school factors (lack of infrastructures, poor teaching methods, lack of

government adequate funding for students), home factors (poor home learning environment, lazy attitudes of students, misplacement of educational priority), and so on. However, what are parents doing to address this problem? Studies show that much effort has not been shown by parents. Olatoye (2004) argued that the low performance in schools among Nigerian students is a direct influence of students' unwillingness to learn; once there is no interest in learning or schooling, the amount of time scheduled for homework is also reduced. Other contributory factors are (1) the lazy attitude of students who consequently obtain poor results in their subjects, which in turn generate more negative multiplier effects on students' subsequent poor achievement; and (2) uninspiring and haphazard methods of teaching in the schools. These factors are those which directly are caused by the students' outcome and the teachers' teaching methods. They can be considered as human factors (laziness and poor teaching). Other reported factors include peer group influences and students' internal states, such as intelligence, motivation, and anxiety (Morakinyo, 2003). These findings are similar to those of Bomboko (1986), who studied the incidents of declining students' interest in secondary school science in Tanzania. He reported that the results in science are usually poor; the teaching of science is unmotivating and lukewarm; the impact of science as a motivational factor is yet to be felt; many students have poor previous preparation in science; and infrastructures for teaching science are inadequate.

From the evidence gathered in the literature to ascertain the combined and relative effects of parental involvement, interest in schooling describes the school as a psychological environment, or what others have referred to as "the school ethos," "school culture, "or "the school climate" (Macchr & Midgley, 1991). Examining how variations in parental involvement and its impact on student interest are associated with the differential impacts of social class, it is

obvious that social class does determine families' perceptions of reality. For example, higher SES parents who are able to meet their children's educational needs motivate their children' interest in schooling. Lower SES parents, on the other hand, who cannot provide the educational materials and pay their children's school fees, discourage their child's motivation to learn. Such children loose interest in schooling.

2.1.5 Girl - Child Education in Nigeria: Cultural Practices

Government efforts in promoting equality of educational access to all students supports my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling. Evaluating the extent to which the Nigerian government supports this effort of parental engagement with schools and students in Nigeria, the Nigerian government has tried as much as possible to ensure that both male and female children have equal access to education. However, female enrollment in schools dwindles as children move up the ladder, which is a factor that prevents effective parental involvement (Onyebunwa, 2003).

According to UNICEF (2002), girls form the majority of the 120 million children who never go to school in the developing world, and the national literacy rate for women is only 56 % as compared to 72% for men. In some states like Sokoto, girls' net enrollment is 15%, as against that of the boys, which is 59% (UNICEF, 2002). This low literacy and achievement rate of women has no doubt led to the low economic empowerment of women, which is also a factor that prevents effective parental involvement.

One of the factors that has been identified for the low enrollment of females in schools is cultural practices. The cultural practice affecting girl education in Nigeria is early marriage. Early marriage has really affected the education of girls in the Nigerian context. Girls are usually given in marriage as early as eleven and twelve years of age. Since the culture of the Hausa

people defines the woman's role as primarily that of house wife, education seems to have little relevance for the role women are expected to play. According to Adesina (1982), marriage is not thought to be compatible with continued school attendance. Parents express the fear that going to school will make girls lose their interest in their role as a house wife.

Another major deterrent to girl education is a near universal fundamental cultural bias in favor of males. There is the wide-spread operation of a patriarchal system of social organization, as well as a generally lower regard for the value of female life. In Africa, including Nigeria, the male child is preferred to the female; when a male is born, the family (both father and mother) believe that an heir is born. A woman who has only female children feels highly insecure in the husband's family. So, a high premium is placed on the male child. This preference is also shown in terms of giving education to the children. If a family must train only one child because of lack of funds, the child to be trained is usually the male child. Since it is believed that the girl shall leave the home one day for another man's home, in order not to "waste" funds on her it is better to train the male, who will stay back at home. This practice has really affected the enrollment of females in schools.

2.2 The Nigerian Context and Its Educational System

Here I discuss the Nigerian educational system and how it influences parental abilities to impact and shape their children's educational performance. This is clearly connected to my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling, and to my overall argument that parental involvement in children's education is very important in the Nigerian context, which is communalistic in nature, compared to the American context, which is more individualistically inclined. This section is also clearly connected to the importance of the study of parental involvement in children's education in the Nigerian context, for which I have discussed the

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following factors: social class, poverty, education and income, students' interest in schooling, girl-child education in Nigeria, poverty, and religion. This highlights the importance of the study and the relevant literatures that discuss the different factors of such importance. I describe the structure of the Nigerian educational system that contributes to the cultural capital of student achievement.

In order to understand the parenting practices that function in the Nigerian context, especially in Lagos and in Ibadan, it is good to have an idea of how the school system functions in such a context. Discussing the educational system throws more light on the importance of resources and the effects of the inadequate allocation of funds in the educational system, and this is relevant to the discussion of my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling. I argue that the Nigerian educational system could be restructured to allow for maximum parental participation by giving parents options about family involvement programs and the activities of school events.

Nigeria consists of over 250 different ethnic groups (Obiakor, 2002). The largest of these include the Hausa, who live in the Northern part of Nigeria; the Yoruba, who live in the South; and the Igbo, who occupy the Eastern part of the country. Historically, Nigeria consisted of a number of separate kingdoms until it came under the control of the British in the late 19th century. Britain practiced a system of indirect rule over Nigeria, controlling the territory through political institutions. The British influence meant that the geographical boundaries of modern-day Nigeria were externally determined, and western- style economic, political, and educational systems were imposed on its indigenous, traditional institutions. Nigeria had to fight for its independence, which was finally achieved in 1960. From 1960 to the early 1980's, the country was under military rule; in the late 1990's, the country redeemed its democratic institutions.

Informal education in Nigeria carries a significant importance: it is collective and social in nature; it is carried out gradually and progressively; and it reckons on the different stages of development. However, the colonization of Nigeria by the British brought with it a western-style educational system. According to Fafunwa (1984), who saw education as a process for transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth to guarantee the national direction of a society, formal education in Nigeria was first introduced in 1842, with the arrival of the first English - speaking missionaries at Badagry, on the coast. The development of education was closely linked to the history of missionary expansion. Many schools were opened by the missionaries, who often gave schools priority over the building of churches, since they felt that educating children into the beliefs of Christianity would be a more effective way of reaching their families and communities. The western-style of education introduced by the missionaries and the colonial government was essentially limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Since the missionary schools did not meet the needs of the local population, in the sense that they were mainly concerned with providing religious education, the federal government took control of schools across the country, in an effort to provide a unified educational system and to provide access to education for all ethnic groups. In 1969, a Nigerian Educational Research Council Conference made proposals for changes to the existing school system, including a reduction of the length of primary schooling from eight to six years, which would spread educational resources more widely (Adaralegbe, 2005).

According to the Better Future Foundation (BFFA, 2001), the structure of the current Nigerian educational system is based on a 6 (-3-3) -4 system, which involves three levels of institutional learning processes: at the primary school level, at the secondary school level, and at the tertiary level. Prior to their attendance in primary school, children experience nursery

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education, which forms the initial part of their learning process in Nigeria. At the age of six, children start attending primary schools, where they spend the next six years, graduating at the age of twelve. At graduation, both public and private primary school pupils are awarded the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC), which in combination with the common entrance examination fulfills the formal requirements for beginning secondary school education. Primary education in Nigeria is compulsory. At this level, pupils have to put on school uniforms. Every school has its own uniform, as a way of distinguishing its pupils from other schools' pupils within the same locality.

Successful pupils at the primary school level who have passed the common entrance examination can proceed with secondary school education. The language of instruction at this level of education is English. This is also applicable at the primary level. Secondary education also takes six years to complete. The first phase of secondary education lasts for three years, and it is provided at the junior secondary schools (JSS). At the end of these three years, students sit for the Junior Secondary School Examination (JSSE); if successful on the examination, they are awarded the Junior Secondary School Certificate (JSSC). Successful completion of the JSS is a prerequisite for the second phase, the Senior Secondary School (SSS), which also lasts three years. Upon completion of this section, students obtain their Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSSC), after writing and passing the Senior Secondary School Examination (SSSE).

Tertiary institutions provide the last stage of formal education, which takes a minimum of four years, completing the 6-3-3-4 educational system. All students who wish to study at the tertiary level, or at institutions of higher learning, must pass the university matriculation examination (UME), conducted by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Institutions offering higher education include federal and state universities, both federal and state

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polytechnics, and colleges of education. There are three stages of education at the university level; the first stage is the first degree program, which leads to the award of a Bachelor's degree, either B.A (Bachelor's of Arts) or B.Sc. (Bachelor's of Science), and which takes four years. The second stage is the Master's degree program, which leads to the award of a Master's degree, either M.A (Master's of Art) or M.Sc. (Master's of Science), taking two years after the first degree. The third stage is the Doctorate degree program, which leads to the award of a Doctorate degree. This lasts for two, three, or more years after the master's degree.

Polytechnics, which are basically vocational schools, provide education in two phases, each lasting two years. After the first two years, students are awarded the Ordinary National Diploma (OND). With these diplomas, students can now proceed to the second stage, which leads to the award of the Higher National Diploma (HND). Students are also required to do an internship for at least one year before being admitted to the HND program. Colleges of education award the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) to students at the end of a three year program. Most NCE holders seek admission into universities to obtain a Bachelor's degree in education, the B.Ed.

2.3 Parenting – Major Influences on Children's Personality and Social Development

The role of father and mother in the home is especially very important when talking about parental involvement in children's education. To what extent are fathers and mothers available to be involved in the whole affairs of their child's learning? This section is important to my discussion of research question number one, which looks at the roles parents play in the education of their children, knowing their personality traits. This is also clearly connected to my overall argument that parental involvement in children's education is very important in the Nigerian context because of the involvement of parents' role in their children's education, which

includes helping with students' homework. Studies of some educational psychologists have also argued that parents who know and study their child's personality and social development also contribute to effective parental involvement in children's education. When parents take the time to know the enduring and consistent patterns of the behaviors of their child, this will help them to know those traits that will yield positive students' outcomes.

Woolfolk (1995) defined personality as the sum - total of all enduring characteristics of individuals that distinguish them from all others in society. These characteristics are individuals' emotions, interests, moods, values, self-concept, aptitude, attitudes, likes, ambitions, etc. The word "enduring" presupposes the long-lasting effect and the consistency of these characteristics in people, while the phrase "sum-total" implies that when a man's interests, likes, dislikes, ambitions, and so on are viewed objectively, the summary of judgment arrived at will describe the individuals' personality.

My discussion of the impact of homes in shaping the personality of the child is also relevant to this section. As asserted by Ajila and Olutola (2007), the home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social, and economic state. The state of the home affects the individual, since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. This is because the family background of a child affects his or her reaction to life situations, and his or her level of performance and the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in the child's up-bringing.

2.3.1 Fathering

In assessing the influence of the structural integrity of the home, Tenibiaje's study (2009) showed that the structural integrity of the homes shows a strong relation to achievement for the child. When a father is present in the home as expected, he is able to contribute positively to

parental roles in the education of the children, but absent fathers may not fulfill this responsibility as expected. The father's presence, physically and emotionally, can have a great influence on the personality development of the child. With the presence of the father, many behavioral problems of youth, such as aggressiveness, apathy, and poor performance, can be nipped at the bud, Tenibiaje's study (2009) reiterated.

Makinde (2010) highlighted that love, time, and attention seem a rarity because most fathers are excessively devoted to work, which is a factor that could prevent effective parental involvement. They go out early in the morning and come back late in the evening. This continues without end. The presence of fathers in a child's life cannot be underestimated because it shows that they have a very important role to play in the education of their children, and this point further highlights the importance of my research question one to this discussion of fathering.

Seeing how the above literatures reflect fathering patterns in Nigeria, the characteristic features of fathers living in Lagos and Ibadan, in the South West of Nigeria, as evidenced in my data, is that they are very empathetic in their interaction with other family members in the community. Another similar feature of fathering is the effect of the father's work characteristics on parenting. The impact of fathering on parenting revolves around the fathers going out to work and coming back to the house, with a good salary to be able to take care of the family. This in a sense explains his responsibilities to his family, which is the essence of research question number one.

One of the negative consequences of the father's work attributes on parenting is the impact of stress on the father's involvement in their children's schooling. According to Joe (2004), Nigeria, which has increasingly become a psychological society, is full of stressful life situations to the extent that in whichever direction one goes, one is very likely to stumble into a

stressful experience. Stressors such as political instability, social unrest, environmental pressures, ethnic conflicts, and poverty are common phenomena in Nigeria today. The stressful circumstances experienced in the Nigerian environment are some of the factors that prevent effective parental involvement. The effects of stress on parenting refer to my research question number three, which examines factors that contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's education at home and at school.

2.3.2 Mothering

Talking about mothering is very relevant to the quality of successful parenting when describing the roles parents play in the education of their children. Although mothering, more often than not, occurs in contexts that vary in terms of material and cultural resources or constraints, according to Paxson (1998), mothering is natural, unchanging, and universal. It is a biological role that can only be carried out by one person, the natural mother. He further argues that every mother at first preserves life, protects the child, fosters growth, and molds the child into an acceptable person in the society. This role forms the bulk of a child's personality development. Because mothers have the power to give life and sustain it through their motherly love and actions, Paxson (1998) made the claim that there is no love like a mother's, strengthening the beliefs that mothers are crucial to the development of emotionally stable and successful adults. Under the mother's guidance, the child undertakes the journey of discovery and gains from it very valuable experiences. The child receives love and affection, which assist him or her to develop a sense of security.

Winnicott (1990) identified three important functions of mothering: (1) Monitoring and surveillance examine the roles of parents in the education of their children as it relates to supporting and assisting the child in developing self-regulatory behavior. (2) Expectant nurturing

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functions are those acts that are expected to be performed by the mother or by the responsible

caregiver, to ensure the physical survival of the child. These functions include caregiving

behaviors, such as providing nutrition for the child and maintaining an environment that provides

for the basic needs of health care, safe housing, maintenance of appropriate physical safety, and

the meeting of general dependency needs. (3) Responsive caregiving – the social partner role

highlights the mother-child relationship and the need to develop a smooth flowing interactive

system. The ability to monitor, interpret, and respond to the child's behavior in an immediate and

appropriate manner is key to fulfilling this role.

2.3.3 Challenges of Mothering

In this concluding sub-section, I discuss the following three challenges: (i) the challenge

of the mother building an emotional connection with the baby; (ii) the challenge of the limited

perspective new parents have had in observing maternal role models; and (iii) the challenge of

the intergenerational patterns that have an impact on mother-child relationships. All these are

related to my research question number one, because they all examine the roles of mothers in

children's upbringing.

Barnard and Solchany (2002) argued that the most important period of mothering appears

to be during the early years, when the child has the most dependency for care. During this period,

the child needs more and gives less than the mother. Barnard and Solchany (2002) believe that it

is the aspect of the mother's capacity to make an emotional connection with the infant that is the

most important aspect and challenge of mothering, since it determines survival and the child's

developmental trajectory. This emotional connection is the foundation on which the

developmental trajectory plays out. Initially, the child needs mothering that reflects hands-on

care and her physical presence. Over time, and as maturation progresses, the child no longer

needs mothering to survive; the goal instead becomes one of becoming a functional, responsible, socially appropriate adult, and this goal is met through the emotional connections made between the mother and the child.

The second challenge Barnard and Solchany (2002) identified is the limited perspective new parents have had in observing maternal role models, and how important this is to the formation of their own parenting. In their Early Head Start Programs, they experienced that many of the women had been emotionally rejected by their own mothers, and in turn they became rejecting of their own mothers. They did not see their mothers as "models" of mothers whom they might look to, and neither could they identify an alternative positive model from their network.

The third challenge to consider is the challenge of the intergenerational patterns that have an impact on mother-child relationships. Here, I illustrate the story of Amy – one of the traumatized mothers Barnard and Solchany (2002) interviewed to explain the obstacles and course of maternal role attainment. This story is found in their study, on pages 12-13 and 20-21. Here follows the story:

Amy was a 21-year-old, unmarried woman who had a history of relationship trauma, as well as physical and sexual abuse. Because of her past, she experienced different symptoms consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder. Amy's past experiences created many obstacles for her in assuming the maternal role to her child. Amy did not play with her baby, for she had never developed appropriate play skills herself as a child. To proffer a solution to Amy's kind of situation, some mothers who have been seen to be effective in breaking this intergenerational cycle are those who have been able to gather emotional support from persons outside their family systems.

2.4 Benefits of Parental Involvement in Homework

Here, I talk about the benefits of parental involvement within the context of homework, which is the essence of research question number one. This is clearly connected to the parenting sections of fathering and mothering that also highlighted the importance of the role of father and mother when talking about parental involvement in children's education. This further elaborated my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling. I approached homework from the standpoint of the many student outcomes influenced by parental involvement, particularly with respect to skills and behaviors directly linked to achievement outcomes. I also focused on homework characteristics in terms of quantity and length of time, as well as on related school and parental practices.

Given the debate on homework, review of the literature reveals that research has been narrowly focused on achievement as an outcome. Only a few studies have looked at homework's effect on attitudes, and on non- academic outcomes, such as study habits and participation in community activities. Educational researchers have shown that in every educational system, homework forms part of students' learning experiences. Homework involves tasks assigned to students by teachers that are intended to be done outside of school hours. It involves written and non-written assignments, as well as preparation for tests and examinations (Cooper, 2001).

In Nigeria, according to Awosolu (1993), homework is a very important learning strategy that entails a lot of activity that goes beyond the walls of the classroom. These activities include finding out facts and solving practical life problems. Real life problems that may not all be solvable in the classroom setting are taken home for experimentation with the help of parents, siblings, peers, and colleagues. This has the value of allowing learners to see the relationship between their school work and real life situations.

For Awosolu (1993), homework involves finding out facts before the lesson starts, or practicing the classwork at home. Homework helps learners play an active role in constructing their own meaning, rather than taking a passive role by expecting to be fed meanings by others. This is a constructivists' view of people like Kamii (cited in Krogh, 1994), who explained that children help construct their own intelligence through active exploration of their environment, by interacting with the world around them. Conrath (2010) was of the opinion that research on homework should consider the learner's learning environment outside the school, in that homework is less effective where the home lacks the basic necessary learning aides, adequate safety, and the support needed to complete the assignments. This is particularly relevant to the Nigerian situation, where the poverty and illiteracy levels are very high (Ayobolu, 2011).

Homework should be "pupil–centered" (Kogan & Rueda, 1997) if the learners' interactions with the real world need to be incorporated. For these authors, children are motivated to learn when conditions are authentic, meaningful, and jointly constructed with peers and teachers. They believe that pupils need to be personally involved with what has been offered in the classroom, so that at home they can proceed at their own pace to try out the skills that were presented to them. The implication of the constructivist theory of homework, according to Yelland (2000), is that when it is collaborative, social cognition is encouraged, which helps individuals' construction of knowledge and understanding of concepts. The peers, parents, siblings, and other people who help the learner to gain understanding of the concepts being learned provide the scaffolding of learning, which aids the construction of the learner's understanding of the concepts being learned. When there is scaffolding in learning, the development of high levels of cognitive skills is enhanced.

Three types of homework have been identified in the literature: practice, preparation, and extension (LaConte, NEA, 2008). Practice assignments involve giving pupils tasks to help reinforce the new lesson, or to internalize a newly acquired skill of solving problems. Preparation assignments are tasks meant to prepare pupils for new lessons or activities the next day, while extension assignments are projects or term papers that parallel classwork and for which students must apply previous learning to complete the tasks, which take a longer time than other types of homework.

Practice assignments, according to Kogan and Rueda, (1997), entail doing other exercises assigned by the teacher to promote more practice on the work done. These practice assignments are commonly represented by activities that reflect teachers' goals, usually expressed in formalized pre–written lesson plans. The variants of the practice assignments are given in worksheets; thus, the homework is not limited to textbook questions only. Other questions that entail practicing the classroom skills taught by the teacher are also assigned to the pupils. Borich and Tombari (1995) argued that practice has been found to be very essential for accomplishing the goals of any instructional method, either directly, indirectly, or self- directed. This practice can take the form of cooperative teaching in groups, or reciprocal teaching, completion of extended projects, and investigations in the library or at a learning center. Practice assignments have been found to be most effective when matched to the ability and background of the individual student, and when students are asked to apply recent learning directly and personally.

The preparation assignments involve using new material which learners may not have been exposed to before the lesson. It is intended to provide background information. It aims at preparing learners for the upcoming lessons. Simply put, it provides students with the opportunity to gain background information in order to increase their learning potential for an

upcoming lesson. It helps learners gain maximum benefits from subsequent school experiences (Smithville, 2001). The results from Awosolu's 1993 study show that most of the experiences gained during the preparation assignments are applications of knowledge to real life situations. Students have to find out new facts themselves by interacting with the environment. This helps students to construct their own understanding of the new lesson in their own way.

Extension assignments, according to Milbourne and Haury (2009), are meant to extend students' exploration of topics more fully than class time permits, or to help students gain skill in self-directed learning and using resources, such as libraries and reference materials. It emphasizes student initiative.

Studies have shown that parents' involvement in helping children with homework assignments after school on a daily basis not only varies, but also has some pedagogical value. Okunola (2003) reiterated that simple interactions, such as spending quality time reading to young children, singing for them, reciting rhymes, and pronouncing alphabets, may lead to greater reading knowledge and skills. This is similar to the findings of Danesty and Okediran (2002), who stated that students are advantaged by some home activities involving practical participation and reading. Parents reading with their children at home yield positive results on language comprehension, reading achievement, and expressive language skills. Students whose parents read to them at home while doing homework are able correctly to identify letters, using them in everyday conversations. Through talking with the child, parents not only provide mediated learning experiences, they also help organize a child's learning experiences.

Seeing homework as a way of focusing children on their learning, enhancing motivation, and using time productively, literacy researchers, including Rollandes and Rousseau (2008), have also argued that doing homework helps to develop good work habits, a positive academic

attitude, and lifelong learning skills, such as time management, organization, coping, persistence, and self-responsibility. Research indicates that children with lifelong learning skills have a sense of future vision–that is, the ability to see beyond our present reality, and such children with "future–focused role images "(Singer, 2011) perform better scholastically and are significantly more competent in handling the challenges of life. Rollandes and Rousseau (2008) posited that students achieve higher scores on literacy related tasks when parents participate in their homework. Parents get involved in their children's homework mainly to establish physical and psychological structures for the child's homework achievement, to monitor the homework process, and to use strategies that will help the child develop capabilities for understanding the homework (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2001).

Additional benefits of parental involvement in homework, according to Smith (2002), who conducted a case study at Clark Elementary School in the Pacific Northwest, is that students' self-confidence improves when parents engage in their children's education. Also, parents have a sense of accomplishment and a sense of community when they are involved. This was evident in the parents' responses; for example, Kate described how she felt when assisting in the classroom: "I am able to be a person that comes into this school knowing that I might make one little difference, just giving them a smile or hug"; "I think that parents being here affords them an opportunity to feel a part of this community" (p.54).

Parents' responses on their involvement in homework in the structured personal interviews in my study indicated that children in private schools were found to return more homework than their public school counterparts. This is probably due to a number of factors, such as higher parental involvement among the private school pupils, and teachers' approach to homework monitoring, which I (the researcher) found out to be better in the private schools than

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in the public schools. My field observations of teachers in classrooms tells me that while it seems that the teachers in the private schools display a very high level of enthusiasm in the study and ensure that most of their pupils turned in homework at the appropriate time, the public school teachers seem to be very pessimistic about their students' ability to complete and return their homework.

According to Cooper (2001), the purpose of homework should be to diagnose individual learning problems. Parents also need to understand that helping with homework does not require them to provide direct, hands-on assistance throughout the duration of homework assignments. This is important for parents to understand, because studies have shown that many parents feel ill-prepared to help with homework due to perceived inadequacies in their own knowledge (Cooper, 2001); thus the potential exists for confusion and losses in student achievement due to the involvement of parents who lack adequate content knowledge and skills.

To minimize this problem, Deslandes (2009) suggested that workshops could be offered to assist and guide family members' involvement in homework activities. Parents' inadequate knowledge and skills suggest that family involvement with homework is a continuum, meaning that they can help to varying degrees and with varying effectiveness. Written feedback on the assignments indicates that homework interactions are highly variable. This implies that the critical outcomes associated with parental involvement in homework may be found in the development of student attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors enacted by student learning. Student learning is an interactive process that includes the offering of information by a social resource and the learner's perceptions of and engagement with that resource (Deslandes, 2009).

Parents' effectiveness in supporting student homework efforts varies across student differences in motivational orientation: more intrinsically motivated students report more

positive responses to relatively direct parental help with homework. Due to variations in parents' effectiveness in supporting student homework efforts, Cooper et al.'s (2000) studies have shown that parents' attitudes towards homework are not static; they change depending on political, economic, social, and educational factors. Cooper et al.'s (2000) studies also indicate that parents' attitudes and beliefs regarding the usefulness of homework and lessons have an impact on their commitment in the achievement of school activities at home. Parents who believe in the usefulness of homework and lessons are more likely to attach importance, to adopt positive attitudes, and to help their children complete such activities.

Bronfenbrenner's (1989) ecological research provides empirical evidence that prompts are effective and necessary strategies for increasing family involvement with children's homework. The following different levels of prompts were identified: (1) Student prompts involve the teacher coaching the students to ask a family member to be involved with homework; students were further prompted to be specific in how to approach a family member. (2) Family prompts involve the teacher prompting families to offer feedback about the homework assignments and regularly requesting a parent signature on the homework sheet. Parents' reactions to this were positive. One parent, praising the request for a signature, said, "It made us accountable" (p.155). (3) No prompts imply that there was nothing printed on the homework to prompt family involvement with the assignments. It appears that family prompts coupled with student prompts contribute to higher levels of family involvement than do student prompts alone.

Despite the reported considerable consensus among schools and families on the importance and purposes of homework, it appears that parents are caught in a double bind on the importance of homework, since on the one hand they perceive homework as a means to improve their child's performance, and on the other hand, they see it as a contrivance that broadens the

gap between home and school cultures. However, as argued by Cooper, et al. (2000), homework may not reach its potential in developing good study habits and encouraging lifelong learning if students fail to see it in a favorable light.

It is clear that not all teachers and schools assign homework, and not all pupils complete the homework they are assigned, thus suggesting that whatever impact homework might have on achievement varies from student to student, depending on how much each student is assigned. However, studies have given some justifications for why students do not turn in homework. Noguera and Wing (2006) argued for "time-management skills" (p.183) as one of the reasons why students who are usually fully engaged seem disengaged from homework activities. Students categorically identified time management skills as the reason for not turning in homework. As an action plan with a measurable goal, we assume that students need to learn how to structure homework into their lives. It is suggested that students can complete their homework if they do it during a regular time period, do homework in a regular space, and reward themselves for doing their homework. While students may identify "time management "as the reason for not completing homework, a closer look reveals deeper issues that can include depression, personal dispositions, and learning styles that make it difficult for students to process information in ways asked for by their teacher. The learning styles mentioned here could also include the needs of the special needs students mentioned in Eleweke's (2003) studies.

On homework management, studies have shown that efficient management of homework remains an educational concern, because the use of homework management strategies is positively associated with the amount of homework completed. According to Boekaerts and Corno (2005), one theoretical approach that taps into homework management is self-regulated learning, particularly from the perspective of volitional control. Volitional control is concerned

primarily with issues of implementation that occur after the goal is set, to protect the intention to pursue that goal in the face of potential distractions or obstacles. Specifically, volitional control is characterized by the self-regulation activities of purposive and persistent striving, including, for example, planning goals, setting priorities, managing resources, budgeting time, and monitoring emotion.

Volitional control is particularly important to the task of homework management, because the goals of homework assignments are regularly set by schools. The main charge for students, as Corno (2004) argued, therefore is to navigate the demands of doing homework by independently managing it as far as the students are planning their time, organizing their workspace, staying focused, minimizing distractions, and coping with unwanted emotions surrounding homework tasks. Corno's (2004) research further shows that trying to get students to complete their homework has become one of the most frequent and frustrating behavioral problems for educators.

Informed by the theoretical framework on volitional control, several studies have linked a broad range of variables to homework management strategies. For example, Corno (2004) linked gender, family help, grade level, homework interest, and affective attitudes to homework management strategies, while controlling for parental level of education. The results revealed that students who receive family help report more frequently managing their homework. In addition, intrinsic reasons (i.e., doing homework for reinforcement of school learning and the development of self-regulatory attributes) are positively related to the use of homework management strategies. Affective attitudes toward homework were also found to have a positive effect on homework management, at both the student level and the class level. The differential effect of homework interest on homework management at the student and class levels indicates

that high homework interest at the class level may lead to higher overall performance of class level homework management. With respect to homework management, the literature review study's finding that the effects of family help are partly mediated by student attitudes suggests that teachers and parents can exert an important influence on homework management, both directly and indirectly, and this affects the level of involvement of parents in their children's education, which is also related to my research question one that includes examining the involvement of parents in homework.

2.5 Challenges to Effective Parental Involvement

Having discussed the benefits of parental involvement in children's education, especially in the area of homework, the previous section is clearly related to this section of challenges to effective parental involvement, since studies have shown that parents want to participate in their child's learning, and they want to be involved in school related activities, including homework; but there are many challenges that prevent parents from active participation. Factors that prevent parents from doing so, according to educational researchers, include the following:

2.5.1 Family Barriers

Family challenges arising from family tensions, and the need to meet family obligations, lead a lot of Nigerian parents not to have enough time to help their children with homework. This is peculiar to parents who juggle two or three jobs in order to meet his or her family responsibilities. The following studies have shown how the factor of family barriers poses challenges to effective parental involvement, especially in the area of homework, which is related to my research question number one. Ejikeme and Ejikeme (2013) posited that the family is the first and basic institution in our culture, and it is the primary place in which children learn to interact with their environment. Thus the very important position of the family in the

development of the individual cannot be underestimated. Family barriers which prevent parents

from actively participating in their children's schooling include challenges derived from family

pressures and socio-economic differences between families (Machen, et al., 2005). These authors

reported that parents with a low socio-economic status exhibit a sense of low esteem in the

presence of teachers and principals. This is because they see teachers as having power of

authority. So, parents feel powerless when it comes to dealing with the school authority. They do

not have confidence in their ability to impact positively in their children's education because

they do not feel educated enough to render assistance to their children, especially in helping them

with homework.

In support of the discussion above, Adeyemo (2005) maintained that parents should

contribute to creating an optimum educational environment at home, at school, and in the

community. This is because parents are an integral part of schooling, and their parental

participation is central to the teacher's professional performance in the classroom. Adeyemo

(2005) also noted that there are parents who, due to occupational demands, are always away

from home, either doing two or three jobs to meet the family obligations. This behavior might

cause some stumbling blocks that lead to children's poor performance at school. It is apparent

that parental involvement in children's learning, which is my study's focus, plays a vital role in

the schooling process, and this is related to my research question two that examines the

connection between home and school in promoting the education of children.

2.5.2 Language Barriers

Language is an important variable in learning style and is another challenge that prevents

parents from actively participating in their children's learning process. Apart from the three

major languages in Nigeria (Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa), Nigeria has many languages which are

spoken by different ethnic groups from the North, South, and East. Due to the variations of these languages spoken by parents, this might pose some challenges to the schools their children attend, in the sense of the schools trying to adapt to the different languages of the parents, and this is also a challenge to parents' active participation in the school's decision making. Due to the different world views of parents from different language backgrounds, parents are not able effectively to be involved in helping their children with homework because of the complexity of the "language of the school" their children attend, and this is related to my research question number one, which examines parents' involvement with students' homework.

For Sheldon and Epstein (2005), the challenge to parental involvement is making sure parents can understand the information schools are sending. Due to language barriers, Goodwin and King (2002) maintained that parents from different cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values, especially immigrant parents, are less involved in school activities. Parents with cultural differences have different norms of child rearing, and this poses a challenge to the teachers, who try to integrate their own different cultural values to accommodate the different values of the parents who are from different cultures. Dealing with these parents with different world views may prevent active parent participation. It may also lead to a difficulty of the school in trying to make a connection between school cultural norms and those of the parents.

This section explains the effects of language on school involvement. It highlights that the language factor complicates the ability of parents to relate with school, especially where the language of the parents is not English. This has a lot of influence in looking at the involvement of parents in children's education. In support of this discussion, Abimbade (2005) argued that the life of the child in the schooling process needs to be discussed, because without the child, there is

not any meaningful teaching and learning that will take place in the school. This is related to my study's main focus, which is parental involvement in children's schooling.

2.5.3 Communication Barriers

Kutelu and Olowe (2013) and Downey (2002) identified communication barriers as an additional challenging factor limiting or affecting parental involvement. Kutelu and Olowe (2013) believe that for many Nigerian families, barriers to effective family-school communication and involvement may emerge from the hardships imposed by poverty. These hardships often leave families feeling inadequately prepared to interact effectively with schools.

Downey (2002) indicated in his study that constructive communication of parents with teachers not only helps parents to know how to assist their children with homework, but also gives them a better insight into the child's expectations at school. Due to cultural misunderstanding, parents' different cultural backgrounds, and social status, such as low educational attainment, parents can feel uncomfortable to communicate with the school, that is, with the principal, classroom teachers, resource teachers, and librarians.

To enhance family connections to the school, Downey (2002) in his studies suggested that schools go beyond the more traditional approaches to communication, such as open houses, to an approach that sets up a personal relationship between particular teachers and each parent. For example, the school could assign an advisor to each student, and this advisor could then serve as the contact person for both the student and his or her parents, to make sure parents are given ample information about the school in general, and about homework and other home support, in particular. This is related to my research question number two, which talks about the home-school connection in promoting the education of children, and research question number one, which examines parents' involvement in students' homework.

2.5.4 Cultural Barriers

Cultural barrier is another factor preventing parents from actively getting involved in their child's learning and helping with homework. Nigerian culture, which is centered on the concept of "brotherhood," looks at the rearing of children as a holistic affair, meaning that it is a communitarian type of parenting. That is why the adage goes that "a child does not belong only to the biological parents." Likewise, educating a child is not an individual responsibility. Rather, it is a community affair, which the Nigerian (African) culture has encouraged. Ogbu (1988) argued that the cultures of students of color or their "way of life" are often incongruous with the expected middle-class cultural values, beliefs, and norms of schools. These cultural differences, he further argued, often result in cultural discontinuity between the students and the school.

Researchers have identified cooperative teaching as one of the techniques most often recommended for all culturally diverse students. Slavin (1987) found that for students' of color, achievement is enhanced when cooperative learning groups incorporate group rewards based on group members' individual learning. He posited that students of color excel in cooperative learning because it captures "the social and motivational dynamics of team sports" (p. 66). Looking at the communitarian aspect of parenting in the Nigerian context, it then implies that the role of the community and parents cannot be over looked in parental involvement with their children, and this is relevant to my research question number one, which examines the role of parents in their children's education.

2.5.5 Logistic Barriers

Logistic barriers imply a transportation problem, which explains that either parents do not have the means to take their children to school, or they do not have the means to get to the school to be involved. They rely on the school bus to take the children, and they themselves rely on

public transportation to get to the school. Nigerian parents whose children attend public schools, from the analysis of the interviews I conducted with them, lamented that the public school system does not provide adequate means of transportation for their children's schooling, and because of this inadequacy, it affects their children's educational outcomes; for instance, the children come late to the first period of classes in the morning, and parents find it difficult to attend most of the school's functions. This is related to my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling, and also to my research question number two, which highlights the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children.

2.5.6 Educational Barriers

Nigerian parents who do not have enough higher education, and those whose children are in high school find it a bit challenging to help their children with homework, because they do not have the prerequisite knowledge to do it. They find it difficult to understand the "language of the school"; because of this, they even find it difficult to talk to the school authorities about the educational needs of their child. Low social economic status parents who do not have a high paying job find it difficult to provide additional educational support, like finding a lesson teacher to teach their child at home. Due to work commitments and the need to meet responsibilities, these parents sometimes do two or three jobs, and this prevents them from having adequate time to help their child with homework. This problem was featured mostly in the interviews I conducted with the parents in the area of how they assist their children with homework assignments, and this is related to my research question number one, which examines involvement of parents in students' homework.

2.6 Summary

In chapter two, I started with the need to study parental involvement in children's education in the Nigerian context. This was followed by discussion of the Nigerian educational system, which influences parental abilities to impact and shape their children's educational performance. I also discussed parenting, which talks about knowing a child's personality and his or her social development. Benefits of parental involvement that focus on homework characteristics in terms of quantity and length of time, as well as on related school practices, also contributed to the discussion. Challenges to effective parental involvement concludes this section.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Method

This is an empirical pilot study that helped me developed an effective way to get access to my research participants and maintained their confidentiality. It enhanced the credibility of my qualitative research. I wrote this chapter in a narrative form about how I used qualitative field methods, including interviews, focus-groups, and observations of family interactions, as the research methodology for this study. I employed a narrative research design, using semi-structured, face-to-face, open-ended responsive interviewing that I believe provides a deep understanding of the topic under investigation. The open-ended questions allowed for both the breadth and the depth of participants' knowledge. Audio-taped interviews were conducted. The interview questions were designed to initiate conversations about home-school interactions. The respondents in my study were comprised of students selected from Senior Secondary School classes (SSS1 and 2) from Lagos and Ibadan (Oyo State), Nigeria, and their teachers, principals, parents, and guardians. Classes SSS1 and 2 are the first two years of high school (equivalent to grades 10 and 11 in the U.S. school system).

The rationale for the choice of SSS1 and 2 students was that they were not preparing for any final examination like the SSS3 students, and they were therefore "less busy" than the SSS3 students. They were also likely to be in a more relaxed and better mood, since they were not under any examination pressure at the time of this study, and they were therefore more likely to give a true picture of their attitudes and performances.

The selection of participants was done by going to schools and selecting participants in Sunday school activities. Their age range was between fourteen and seventeen years. I reduced

my sample population of students to 25, parents to 19, teachers to 15, and principals and vice

principals to three. These are also the equivalent numbers of interviews I completed; that is, 25

interviews with students, 19 interviews with parents, 15 interviews with teachers, and three

interviews with principals. Fifteen students were interviewed from private schools, while 10

students were interviewed from state schools. Eleven parents were interviewed from private

schools and eight parents were interviewed from state schools. Nine teachers were interviewed

from private schools and six teachers from state schools. One principal and one vice principal

were interviewed from a private school, and one principal was interviewed from a state school.

Four parents who participated in the focus group had children in a private school, and four

parents had children in a state school.

Table 1 Equivalent Numbers of Respondents and Interviews

Subjects	Numbers of Respondents	Numbers of Interviews
Students	25	25
Parents	19	19
Teachers	15	15
Principals	3	3

Data were collected through the use of (i) interviews of students, teachers, principals,

parents, and guardians; (ii) parents' questionnaires, which provided information on educational

qualifications, socio-economic levels, family size, and parent-child interactions; and (iii) focus

group discussions. The parents' questionnaire also sought information, first, on parents' general

assessment of their involvement in their children's education, and second, on the involvement of

parents in the provision of basic education for their ward. The limitation of my use of the

questionnaire data in my results chapter was because of the limited number of responses I got

from the participants (just five in number), and this was not sufficient enough for the responses I

expected. So, I did not focus much on the questionnaire responses; rather I focused more on the interview responses.

Before I went to the selected schools to collect interview data, I got a letter of introduction from the University of Ibadan's Institute of Education. This letter gave me access to the schools, through which the principals allowed me to conduct my interviews. There were some methodological challenges in the field, which I explain later. To describe the geographical context of the two cities where I carried out my studies, first, Ibadan is the state capital of Oyo state, with a population of over three million. It is the most populous state, and it is the country's largest state by geographical area. Ibadan is located in South-Western Nigeria, and it had been the center of administration for the old western region since the days of British colonial rule. The main inhabitants of the state are the Yorubas, as well as other communities from different parts of the country.

The schools I visited in Ibadan for data collection were as follows: C.L. Oyesina Model Secondary School, Monatan High School, Maverick College, and the International School at the University of Ibadan. The characteristics of the first two schools mentioned above is that they are mixed public schools that are under the control of the state government. The population of each school is about two thousand students, with about forty teachers at each school. The main feature of these public schools is that they are poorly funded by the state government, which means that they have poor infrastructures for students' learning. The classrooms are overcrowded, the school laboratories are not equipped, the libraries are empty, and there are no adequate sporting facilities for the students. Due to this problem of inadequate funding of public schools, the students' performances in final examinations are always very poor. This is a replica of the characteristics of Nigerian public schools generally.

The latter two schools I mentioned, which are Maverick College and the International School, are private schools. These two schools are being funded by private stakeholders. The demographics of the students is that most of them are from middle class parents, compared to the public schools, where most of the students are from working class families. The characteristics of these private schools is that they are adequately funded by private stakeholders, so there are adequate infrastructures for students' learning. The population of the students is under control. For example, the classes are not overcrowded. Each class room may consist of twenty-five students. Due to the organizational structure of these private schools and the adequate monitoring of learning process, the student performance in private schools outweighs that of the public schools. The characteristics of these two private schools are replicas of the characteristics of the Nigerian private schools in general.

The second city, Lagos, is in a state located in the southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Lagos served the dual role of being the state and federal capital until the federal capital was moved to Abuja. The actual population of the state is still disputable, according to the official Nigerian census of 2006, but it is still the most populous state in the country. Lagos still remains the financial center of the country. The schools I visited in Lagos for data collection were as follows: Early Life High School, Radiance Secondary School, and St. Jude Secondary School. Early Life High School is a public school with a population of two thousand five hundred students. The characteristics of this public school are the same as the characteristics of the public schools I earlier mentioned in Ibadan. Radiance Secondary School and St. Jude Secondary School are private schools, and they share the same characteristics as the private schools I mentioned in Ibadan. The student population of each of the private schools is about one thousand two hundred.

The students, teachers, principals, parents, and guardians whom I interviewed were selected to contribute their ideas and attributes that seemed relevant to the context and content of the study. In addition to interviewing parents and students, interviews with principals and teachers were also carried out, with a view to obtaining more comprehensive information about the schools and their policies. School prospectuses were obtained from the schools and were used to supplement the information obtained from parents, guardians, and teachers, particularly in relation to school homework policies. The interviews ranged from 20-30 minutes, and they were conducted at a variety of locations, from the classroom to a family's home. The interviews were conducted between April and October of 2015. The form and order of the interview questions were not rigid, and the tone of the questioning was friendly and gentle, with little confrontation, only when it was necessary. Questions were asked at the interviewer's discretion. The interviews allowed me to have open discussions with parents and guardians, students, teachers, and principals who were at the school during the research period. The interviewing allowed for more personal and descriptive information, giving participants time to think more deeply about their own feelings, reactions, and beliefs.

The purpose of the interviews was to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of my participants on the issues of parental involvement that I was investigating. As the interviewer, my primary function was to learn what the respondents believed about the subject being studied, without judging or influencing that response in any way. The very essence of interviewing is the establishment of a human-to-human relation with the respondents and the desire to understand rather than to explain, because the goal of interviewing is understanding, which is paramount to establishing rapport with respondents, according to Marshall and Rossman (2011).

In my interviewing, I made an effort to establish what Patton (1990, p.58) called empathetic neutrality: empathy communicates interest in and caring about people, while neutrality means being non-judgmental about what people say and do during data collection. As I listened to the interview tapes, I became very aware of my presence as a researcher, but not as a factor whose voice might influence the respondents' responses. I became a "privileged listener" (Bernie Siegel, 1988, p.30) to the individuals and groups in the in-depth interviews who spoke openly about their lives, and who understood my motives in doing the study.

I also used observations and field notes because I was looking for personal experiences in actual school and home settings, about which this narrative research offers practical, specific insights. Participant observation also formed part of the main tool of this research. I employed the participant observation technique so as to develop rapport with research informants, and to be culturally responsive. My observation strategies focused on classroom interactions among students, teachers, and principals, as well as events in the families and communities, such as attending church services and participating in Sunday school activities, attending school sports activities, going with family members to the store, and just spending social time with the participants in various settings. The purpose of the observations and the participation was to gain a different perspective into the lives of the interviewees. By taking part in the activities of the individuals being studied, as a researcher I learned about the respondents' perceptions of reality, termed "constructed realities" (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996, p. 132), as expressed by their actions and in their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings.

As a researcher, I employed some interpersonal skills, such as questioning, conversing, and listening. I asked questions in such a way that the respondents believed that they could talk freely. I asked open-ended questions, which required the respondents to respond more

elaborately and in greater detail in their own words. Open-ended questions enabled me to get responses that were culturally relevant to the respondents, and to ask questions that were rich and explanatory in nature. The rationale for these skills is that participants were able to talk freely, openly, and honestly about the research topic, since they felt comfortable in the interviewer's presence, trusted the interviewer, and believed the interviewer was interested in their story.

My observations were recorded as field notes in my journal and then incorporated into the data. Field notes are the principal way of collecting and analyzing participant observational data. I began the field notes as "jottings" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 98), to record the on-the-spot notes that a researcher can take. These were then elaborated into full field notes, to be useful for analysis. The field notes were a source of additional information for answering the research questions.

I also used focus groups. Eight parents participated. There were two groups; each had four participants. There were two sessions for each group of four parents, for a total of four sessions; each lasted for one and half hours. According to Krueger (1994), the focus group is a special type of group in which the researcher creates a permissive environment that nurtures different perceptions and points of view, without pressuring participants to vote, plan, or reach consensus. In other words, a focus group is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment.

The advantages of the focus group, according to Krueger, are as follows: (1) it is a socially oriented research procedure; (2) it is flexible, measuring what it is intends to measure; (3) it produces fast results; (4) it has a low cost of production; and (5) unlike structured interviews, increasing the population size requires little time and resource investment. Combining individual interviews with group interviews increases the richness of interview data,

and also gives participants the opportunities to elaborate on their ideas without feeling pressured by the presence of other group members (Fontana & Frey, 2003).

To understand best the topic under investigation, I used purposive sampling, because those being interviewed fit a specific purpose. The respondents were chosen on the basis of their knowledge of the information desired. The respondents in the study were selected deliberately in order to provide important information that was helpful in answering the research questions (Patton, 1990). Merriam (1998) defined the term "purposeful sampling" as a sampling procedure which is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned; the goal of this sampling is not to draw general conclusions about the population based on random sampling, but instead to give detailed descriptions about specific types of cases, Merriam (1998) emphasized.

The instrumentation of data collection for the study was carried out using parents' questionnaire instruments, which consisted of the following sections: Section A consisted of several items tapping respondents' socio-demographic variables, such as age, sex, family composition, and socio-economic and occupational status. Section B evaluated parents' general assessment of their involvement in their children's education. Section C addressed the perceptions of parents of their involvement in providing basic education. Section D consisted of parents' expectations of their child's performance. Section E addressed parenting; Section F entailed communication; Section G talked about volunteering at school; Section H discussed learning at home; Section I consisted of participation in decision making; and Section J consisted of parents' activities outside of home.

The questionnaire instrument that was used drew on focus group discussion topics and questions about students, parents, guardians, teachers, and principals. The administration of the

instrument was as follows: it was given to parents to fill out. After the collection of copies of the questionnaire, a follow-up of the parents was conducted, to ascertain that they actually completed the questionnaire themselves. For the reliability of the instrument for this study, a test-retest reliability technique was adopted, in which the reliability of the research instrument was measured a couple of times (three times), under the same circumstances, and consistent results were achieved. The questionnaires and the interview questions were related in the sense that the questionnaires evaluated parents' general assessment of their involvement in their children's education, while the interview questions examined parents' specific questions of their involvement in their children's education. It is important to note that, because of the limited number of questionnaire responses I received from the study participants, I did not use my questionnaire data in my results chapter extensively.

The parents' questionnaire, which indicated the nature and extent of parents' involvement in their children's educational experiences, was premised on Epstein's (1995) framework, which consists of "parenting," "communicating," "parent-volunteering," "decision making," "parents help children with homework," and "educational activities outside of school." The items were, however, adapted from the work of Deutscher (2004), which used parent involvement data that were collected from the family survey 2002 and the parent volunteer logs during the 2002- 2003 school year at the Lewis Center for Educational Research (LCER).

The questionnaire was a Likert scale, made up of different options, ranging as follows:

(i)   Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA).

(ii)   Never, Less Frequently, Frequently, More Frequently.

(iii)   Never, Occasionally, Often, Always.

On methodological challenges, I encountered some problems in the field, but a major challenge I experienced while collecting data was a logistic problem. The parents especially had a problem of keeping to the agreed interview scheduled time. For example, I agreed to meet them after school hours on the school premises or at an agreed venue (either at their shops or place of work), or at a neutral place that was comfortable, but in most cases, these parents were not available because of their other commitments. So, we had to reschedule the time again and again before they finally made it to the appointment interview. Because of these inconsistencies in not keeping to the interview time on the part of the parents, the duration for the completion of data collection was prolonged. Another challenge was transportation. Going to the research sites was sometimes difficult due to the scarcity of fuel (gas), which made the taxi drivers not work.

Recording data is an essential process of data collection in this approach to qualitative research. Interview data consisted of tape recordings, typed transcripts of tape recordings, and the interviewer's notes. Interview tapes were listened to prior to transcription and then transcribed, and the qualitative data was submitted to a content analysis in order to identify specific indicators of involvement which appeared to be relevant to participants' attitudes and practices regarding education. Notes were taken during the interview so as to note certain points of emphasis or to make additional notations. Interview notes were used during the transcription of the interview recordings to clarify and add contextual details to what the respondents said. My use of a digital recorder was important because it had the advantage of preserving the entire verbal part of the interview for later analysis. All recorded and transcribed interviews were analyzed with ATLAS.ti and SCRIVENER writing soft wares.

The credibility of the tape-recorded and transcribed interviews was assured by using triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing, the goal for which in qualitative research is

to arrive at a more accurate, objective, and neutral representation of the topic under investigation (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I used triangulation to check the authenticity of my results so as to enhance the trust-worthiness of the information. Member-checking is another validation strategy that I used. It is a technique in which participants review their responses to be sure that the data accurately represent their voice (Creswell, 2009). I also used peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of my findings. Those who were involved were other parents who were not themselves contributing directly to the main data of my study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "Peer debriefing is an effective way of shoring up credibility and providing methodological guidance … "(p. 243).

I also used constant reflexivity (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992) to enhance the trustworthiness of my work. Reflexivity refers to researchers' ability to engage critically and to reflect on the manner in which their own values impact aspects of the research process. It requires that we acknowledge our own assumptions so that we can approach analysis without imposing our perspectives on the accounts and the actions of the people whose data we are considering.

According to Glesne (2011), reflexivity is an understanding of the ways in which one's personal characteristics, values, and positions interact with others in the research situation to influence the methodological approach one takes, the methods one uses, and the interpretations one makes.

For justification of this study, I used three strategies to verify the accuracy of my research findings. Examining the literature on validity, Merriam (1998) has suggested that one way to ensure validity in a qualitative study is by "clarifying the researcher's assumptions, world view, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study" (p .205). The second way is "rich thick description" (p. 203), which allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability

because of the detail about the participants under study. Detailed description is an important provision for promoting credibility because it helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated. The third way is "peer examination" (Merriam, 1998, p.204), which provides an external check of the research process. I have also obtained human subjects approval for this study. Processes, including the use of consent forms, were approved by the University's Institutional Review Board.

In reference to coding, a descriptive content thematic analysis approach, using Strauss' framework (1987) and inductive coding methods, is what I discuss in this paragraph. All the recorded principals', teachers', students', parents', and guardians' interviews were fully transcribed. All these made up the samples of data for the content analysis. The salient ideas from the transcribed interviews of respondents' responses to research questions that were both important and interesting were then coded into themes.

My coding was taken from my interviews. All transcripts were coded according to respondents' responses to each interview question that were related to the research questions. Coding involves taking text data gathered during data collection, segmenting sentences into meaningful categories, and labelling those categories with a term in the actual language of the respondents (Creswell, 2009). The key feature of most qualitative coding is that it is developed in interaction with the particular data being analyzed. This is what Creswell (2009) called open coding.

In this study, data were categorized into the following three areas:

Category 1 included data from conversations and interviews.

Category 2 included data from observations of family interactions.

Category 3 included data from field notes.

I categorized my coding into different themes according to respondents' responses to my interview questions and research questions. My coding was related to the specific questions of the interview and research questions, as well as notes taken from my observations of family interactions. I went through my interview data and identified ideas that spoke to my research questions and or my literature review. I then organized these ideas into themes. As required by IRB, I used pseudonyms in my themes to replace the names of my respondents, to protect the privacy of the participants.

Analysis is part of the research design and the data collection. It is a cyclical process of resolving data into its constituent components, in order to reveal their characteristic themes and patterns. It is a reflexive activity by which the researcher expands and extends data beyond a descriptive account (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). In a qualitative descriptive analysis, all transcribed interviews are read through in order to check the accuracy of the transcription. Different ways to analyze qualitative data include description, or a more in-depth methods approach, but I have used thematic analysis in this study, which is the most common method of qualitative data analysis, one that looks across all the data to summarize all the views collected. Thematic analysis is a form of inductive analysis; through inductive analysis, "findings emerge out of the data, through the analyst's interactions with the data" (Patton, 2002, p. 453). The key stages in thematic analysis are reading and annotating transcripts; identifying themes, and developing a coding scheme, which is a list of all the themes and the codes that apply to the data.

3.2 Summary

Chapter three presents the characteristics of the qualitative research method used in the study. This method involved a narrative research design, using semi- structured, face-to-face, open-ended responsive interviewing, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the topic

under study. The respondents in the study included students from Senior Secondary School 1 and 2 (SSS1 &2) in Lagos and in Ibadan. The respondents also included teachers, principals, parents, and guardians. Data were collected through the use of interviews, questionnaires, the participant observation technique, and focus group discussions. All recorded and transcribed interviews were analyzed using ATLAS.ti and Scrivener writing soft wares. The credibility of the tape-recorded and transcribed interviews was assured by using triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing. Constant reflectivity was also used to enhance the trust worthiness of the work.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION

This data presentation contains themes about parental involvement in the students',

parents', teachers', and principals' interview responses as they relate to my research questions. It

also contains responses from questionnaire data, but in a very limited manner, due to the fact that

the respondents' questionnaire responses were very few (just five in number). Data is presented

in terms of the sequence of respondents' responses, and the percentages of respondents

expressing each theme are also presented. Some of the themes that did not fall into any category

of the research questions are in the concluding section as being beyond the scope of this study.

4.1 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Students' Interview Responses

Table 2 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Students' Interview Responses

Theme 1	Educational Support: Homework, Financial, Physical and Emotional Supports, Volunteer, Communication with Students, and Student Motivation
Theme 2	Love as Motivation from Parents, and Rigidity of Parents as Educational Barriers
Theme 3	Involvement in Community Activities - Volunteer
Theme 4	Upbringing in Homework Support and Overcoming Challenges of Educational Barriers in School
Theme 5	Discipline in the Home : Homework
Theme 6	Student Communication and Relationship with Parents : Homework
Theme 7	Membership of Ethnic and Cultural Groups and Participation in Community Festivities.

Cultural traditions and belief practices are addressed in *theme 1* with respect to the

educational support of children and families in Nigerian homes. The role that parents play is

vital to the homework support they give and the financial, physical, moral, and emotional

support to which the children are entitled. To enable the children, a mental and physical stability

to function academically in society is essential for students' achievement. Students volunteering

in community activities is also a form of educational support and a factor that contributes to

effective parental involvement in children's learning. Students also reported that their parents, in

their efforts to improve their relationship with them, communicated in their first languages (Yoruba and Igbo) at home to explain their homework, which is also a form of educational support. Students' motivation to stay in school comes from their parents' willingness to support their children's education totally in all aspects. Like any young Nigerian student, I can relate to the concerns of the students and their parents. Coming from a caring family with much love and support is a quality of a Nigerian family, which is the essence of *theme 2*. The love of parents in *theme 2* captivates the strengths that bind the family. While love in the family strengthens the unity within the family, the rigidity of parents, on the other hand, is the unwillingness of the parents to change their mind easily, which is a form of educational barrier that prevents effective parental involvement.

As a young student in Nigeria, volunteering to participate in the community, *Environmental Sanitation Day Event (ESD)* is an option for everybody. Involvement in community activities enables students' participation. *Theme 3* expresses this point as demonstrated by one of the student participants (Mariam), who participated in the ESD event, such as sweeping the compound, cleaning the gutters, and clearing the drainages. Participating in such community events encompasses the upbringing in the educational support of homework and the perseverance to overcome the challenges of educational barriers the student faces in school, which reflects *theme 4*. When students misbehave themselves, such as not completing their homework, it results in the denial of privileges from their parents. Such privileges include parents withholding their children's' cell phones, their school lunch money, and the prevention of friends from coming over to the house. This is expressed in *theme 5*.

Emphasizing the connection between home and school, *theme 6* expresses that parents speaking the first languages, Yoruba and Igbo, at home apart from English, the official language

to help explain their homework, helps the students' communication both at home and in school. *Theme 7* explains that parents' participation in cultural organizations in their communities leads to students' awareness of the importance of belonging to societies and organization.

4.1.1 Theme 1: Educational Support: Homework, Financial, Physical and Emotional Supports, Volunteer, Communication with Students, and Student Motivation.

This theme addresses the question of the kind of support the families provide in terms of cultural traditions and belief practices in their homes. This is relevant to my research questions one and two because it addresses the role parents play in providing the financial, physical, moral, and emotional support the children need in their schooling, and the involvement of parents in homework support in the children's schooling. This is also important to my study's focus generally, which is parental involvement. The majority of the students responded that their parents provide financial, educational, emotional, and moral supports. The parents offer good advice whenever the students are passing through any particular situation. The parents attend children's PTA meetings and the schools' open day programs whenever time permits, and they implement whatever decisions are reached. They pay routine visits to check their children's performance in school, apart from their attendance at the open day and PTA meetings. The parents assist in homework and check their books regularly to ensure that they did their school work. Students also narrated that they volunteer to participate in some community activities, like the monthly environmental sanitation day events; and that their parents communicate in their first languages (Yoruba and Igbo) with them at home to help them with their homework. Two of the students interviewed had these views:

Danny's parents, whose child attends a private school, provide everything in their capacity to ensure that he becomes great in the future. Apart from helping with homework, the parents pay the school fees, provide uniforms, and provide food for good health and strength. His

parents also provide spiritual support. "My parents are very supportive in making sure I become successful. They pay my tuition fees, buy my books, pay for my feeding, and help me with my homework. They also pray for me always."

Lora, who also attends a private school, reported that her family pays her school fees and buys textbooks and other necessary things needed for her schooling. She reported that both parents are good in special subject areas, and they help in these subjects. Her father assists her to do her assignments in mathematics and science-based subjects, while the mother is good at English. Quoting Lora, she had this to say: "My father is good in sciences and he helps me with my math and science subjects while my mum is good in arts subjects. She helps me with my English assignments. My parents make sure my school fees are paid on time and my books are available at the beginning of the school term."

4.1.2 Theme 2: Love as Motivation from Parents and Rigidity of Parents as Educational Barriers

This theme explains some of the strengths and weaknesses in the families. About 80% of the students interviewed ascribed the strength in their family to the love that binds them together as one. They described the strength of the family as the belief in each individual's capacity and the encouragement that accompanies this belief. The remaining 20% of the students talked about the weakness in their family, which is parents not being willing to change their mind easily, which is a kind of educational barrier that prevents effective parental involvement. For example, Ade, who attends a state school, gave the example that he wants to become a musician, but his mother strongly opposes it because she wants him to pursue another career. "My son, as your mother, I will support you to reach the highest level of your chosen career, but not as a musician."

The students also expressed a very close relationship existing among member families as a strength. The strength of the family lies in the fact that they try to protect each other, the mother supporting the father in overcoming some of the challenges of the family. The weakness they expressed lies in the financial constraints of the father struggling to meet the financial demands of the family. Dare, from a private school, had this to say: "My parents are supportive of each other in meeting some of the challenges the family faces. The limitation my father faces is that he struggles to keep up to the financial obligations of his family." This theme also answers my research question one because here the parents are playing their role in making sure they guide their children in choosing the right career for their future.

4.1.3 Theme 3: Involvement in Community Activities-Volunteering

This theme addresses students' volunteering to participate in community activities and how this participation helps or hinders their education. This is related to my research question number three, which examines other factors that contribute to parental involvement in children's learning. This is because one of such factors highlights the need for community involvement in the provision of basic education for students. Here there were mixed responses; 60% of the students responded that they do not participate in community activities because of the following reasons: they live in an estate where people mind their own business; the environment in which some of them live is not too conducive; and they normally come back late to the house in the evening, around 6 pm. By contrast, the remaining 40% said they do, such as Mariam, who attends a state school and participates in environmental sanitation, such as sweeping the compound, cleaning the gutter, clearing the drainages, and filling potholes. These community activities help her a lot in her academics by helping her to be hardworking and neat in the school. "By participating in the environmental sanitation and cleaning of the compounds, it helps me to

be better prepared for the hard work in the school in terms of keeping the classrooms clean and getting ready for the class."

Adanma, from a private school, said that she participates in community activities in order to obtain guidance if she has any problem with her education. Members of the community also cater for part of her needs in the school. Oreoluwa, who also attends a private school, lives in an elite community and so does not participate in any community activity. But Aisha, from a state school, reported that people avoid interfering with each other's affairs in her case, and because of that, she does not get herself involved with the activities in the community. Quoting Aisha, she had this to say: "People in my neighborhood are very suspicious of each other and because of this, they do not interfere in each other's business. Everybody minds their own affairs."

4.1.4 Theme 4: Upbringing in Homework Support and Overcoming Challenges of Educational Barriers in School

This theme illustrates whether the way the students are being raised in their homes helps them to overcome the challenges of educational barriers they face in school. This theme answers my research question number two, which is about the connection between home and school. This is because, in this theme, students are able to relate the values they learn at home to school outcomes in the area of homework support, and this is relevant to my study's main focus, which is parental involvement in children's education. About 75% of the students' responses indicate that their upbringing to observe good moral values helps them to be disciplined, respectful, and trustworthy, and these are attributes that are assisting them in their academics. Their upbringings make them be honest and hardworking, and to have the belief that nothing is impossible. This culture of discipline and hard work helps the family to operate on the principle of not delaying on actions, so that procrastinating does not affect things that demand urgent action, such as their school assignments. Mary attends a state school, and her parents taught her how to endure

situations and circumstances, which according to her is a necessary factor to excel in life. This helps her to endure the hardships she is facing in school. "I have been enduring the stress for the past six years I have been in this school," she said. Aliyu, who attends a private school, narrated that his upbringing helps him to overcome challenges in school. He said his parents trained him to have respect for others, including his peers, and he acts as a peace-maker to his colleagues who do quarrel in school. Ibro's mother, whose son attends a private school, always told him not to give up easily on challenges but to persevere. He usually remembers his mother's teachings and applies the same principle whenever he is faced with challenging situations in school. "My mum taught me resilience, patience, and tolerance in difficult times," Ibro explained.

4.1.5 Theme 5: Discipline in the Home: Homework

This theme examines if parents discipline students at home when they misbehave, such as not completing homework, what kind of discipline they receive, and whether they get punished if they do not perform well at school. This theme is related to my research question number one, which examines the role of parents in the education of their children, and how involved parents are in their children's' homework. This is because here we heard students reporting how they are punished for wrong behavior and are encouraged to do better in their academics, which is all part of the parents' effort in improving the quality of parental involvement in their children's education. About 55% of the students said that they get punished for wrong behavior, but are only scolded and encouraged to do better if they do not perform very well in their academics. The students are exposed to disciplinary measures in the home that ranges from flogging with a cane to being shouted at. They reported that they face sanctions at home, depending on the seriousness of the offence committed.

For minor cases, for instance, Andrew, from a private school, said that his phone may be seized; Ola, who attends a state school, said her parents may not fulfill the promises they made to her; for Aremu, from a private school, the parents usually administer a double portion of house chores. Maria is usually scolded as a warning, which might turn out to be strokes of cane if the behavior persists, while Belinda's movement, also from a private school, is restricted, and she gets punished if she falls short of expectations in her academics. "My parents will not give me what they earlier promised to give me if I misbehaved at home or they heard any negative report from the school. The most common form of punishment is that they will withhold my lunch money for some days," Ola narrated.

4.1.6 Theme 6: Student Communication and Relationship with Parents: Homework

About 70% of the students recognized that English is the official language, but at home, they also communicate with the first languages, which in this case are Yoruba and Igbo. Students reported that their parents use these languages to explain their homework to them, which is a form of educational support that contributes to effective parental involvement. English is the language encouraged in Kunle's family, and Kunle attends a private school, because the father wants the children to be fluent in the English language. Although Jane, who attends a state school, can speak both Igbo and Yoruba, members of her family communicate in the Igbo language. Ore's family members communicate in the Yoruba language. This theme of communication further highlights the connection between home and school, which is the essence of my research question number two.

4.1.7 Theme 7: Membership of Ethnic and Cultural Groups and Participation in Community Festivities

Some of the family members of the students belong to the cultural organizations of their state. They described their involvement as based on their family's beliefs. About 70% of the

students reported that their parents belong to one ethnic association or the other. This theme is related to my research question number three, which examines other factors that contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's learning. In recognition of the need to involve parents and the members of different ethnic communities in the education of their children, it is highly imperative to recognize the divergent interests of the various pressure groups in education, and to ensure a balance of interest. The students participate in community activities on their parents' invitation. The parents belong to age group cultural organizations, which is a family inherited legacy.

Melinda's parents are actively involved in ethnic groups, but Melinda, who attends a private school, is not encouraged to join, so she does not benefit in any way from this. "My parents did not see the need why I should be involved in any of these ethnic and cultural groups now that I am still in school because they do not want me to lose focus from my studies." Ije's parents belong to an ethnic organization where decisions are taken on the development of their home town. Ije, who attends a state school, participates in wedding ceremonies, but she does not attend burial ceremonies. Kunle's father, whose son also attends a state school, attends the local government association meetings monthly. His attendance at these meetings is helpful because he meets with elderly people and draws on their wealth of knowledge. Some of the students' parents belong to one form of religious society or another. For example, Ahmed's family practices Islam and goes to the mosque to observe their Muslim rites. Ore, who attends a private school and whose parents are both workers in the church, is only permitted to participate in events and activities in the church and to attend weddings, birthdays, and naming ceremonies regularly. Lilian's parents attend village meetings, where they contribute their quota to help

improve the standard of living of rural people. Lilian, from a state school, attends all types of festivities except burial ceremonies.

4.2 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Parents' Interview Responses

Table 3 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Parents' Interview Responses

Theme 1	Educational Support: Homework, Moral, Financial, Emotional, and Social Supports
Theme 2	Parents' Relationship with Students and Teachers: Homework
Theme 3	The Importance of Culture
Theme 4	Child Rearing Practices
Theme 5	Discipline and Household Chores: Homework
Theme 6	Education Is Necessary for Success: Motivation
Theme 7	Expectations of Parents for Their Children: Motivation
Theme 8	Role of Parents: Help with Homework
Theme 9	Role of School

As everything in life comes from learning, parents support students' education in all aspects: morally, financially, emotionally, socially, and in the areas of homework. *Theme 1* expresses these concerns, based on how some of the parents express how they support their children's educational goals. For example, Mrs. Oje said supporting her children's education is the upmost priority for her. Mr. Peters Anderson supports his children's education by paying their school fees promptly. He usually checks their school work on a regular basis.

Theme 2 examines the kind of cordial relationship that exist between parents and their children. The parents' responses indicate that they have a cordial relationship with their children because they do create time to help them with their homework, and to have some activities together such as sharing evening meals and having discussion time for some important family issues. Highlighting the importance of cultural norms as essential ingredients of parental involvement in children's education, *theme 3* reiterates that one cannot underplay the role of

culture as a factor that contributes to effective parental involvement when examining the role of

parents and its impact on their children's learning.

Since my study's design, and possibly my conceptual framework, may not have included

these factors of variations in cultural background within members of the same socio-economic

group, so that the influence of the first can be distinguished from the second sufficiently into

account, this is an issue that might be more relevant in a future study. The same percentage of

parents interviewed expressed that the part of the culture they want their children to maintain is

to respect elders and to have tolerance of one another. Child rearing practice reflects the

attributes that parents believe contributes to parental involvement in schooling. In addition, in

theme 4, parents believe that simplicity is an essential component of parenting.

In addition, enumerating the importance of home values in the Nigerian family setting,

the discipline in the family when children misbehaved in failing to do their homework and the

household chores   are parts of the family rearing setting, which bring in *theme 5*. A child's

misbehavior, according to parents, is measured by either flogging the child or asking the child to

get on his or her knees with both hands up for a couple of hours. If a child is disrespectful, in

non-compliance with the house rules or incomplete household chores, it results in the

consequences mentioned above. Parents' overall belief in *theme 6* explains a child's motivation

to succeed, which comes from an adequate quality education in the Nigerian school system.

Due to the parents' role in making sure their children get a quality education, parents have high

expectations for their children which *theme 7* examines. Parents interviewed expressed that

because of children's different abilities, the parents would not force any career choice on their

children; rather, they will allow them to make their own decisions and they will give adequate

support. The role of parents and school in *themes 8 and 9* complements each other in the support of students' education.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Educational Support: Homework, Moral, Financial, Emotional, and Social Supports

This theme has one ultimate goal, which is for parents to support their children's education in all aspects so as to produce positive educational outcomes that contribute to effective parental involvement in children's schooling. This theme is related to my research question number one, which describes the roles parents living in Lagos and in Ibadan play in the education of their children. About 80% of the parents interviewed said they supported their children's education morally, financially, socially, and also in helping with homework.

According to Mrs. Amara, whose children attend a state school, education is important because everything in life comes from learning. Being an educationist, she is aware of what it takes to train a child, and she said she would give the necessary financial and material support for her children to be the best in their various fields. Here is an excerpt from her interview: "As a teacher, I know what it entails to train a child and I know that everything in life comes from learning. I am ready to give my children all the important financial and material support they need." Mrs. Oje, whose children attend a private school, said supporting her children's education is the top most priority for her. She supports her children's education both morally and financially. She helps her children in their assignments and provides all the text books needed in their class. This is also related to my research question number one. She does not visit her children's school on a regular basis unless occasion demands it, like PTAs and open days.

Mr. Peters Anderson supports his children's education by paying their school fees promptly. He usually checks their school work on a regular basis and guides them to do their assignments. Mr. Peters, whose children attend a private school, supports his children's

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education by paying them a visit at the school on a regular basis, and by collaborating with the management to checkmate their behaviors. "I pay my children school fees, check their school work regularly and I also contact the school management to monitor their behaviors in school." Mr. William believes in education because it is the key to whatever you want to become in the future. He plans to give his children in the state school the best education so that they will get to the peak of any career they want to pursue in life. Mr. Wole, whose children also attend a state school, does not joke with the education of his children, and he does whatever is needed to give the best education to his children. He participates in the children's homework, and he also gives them what would make them succeed in the near future. Mr. Wole sees the children regularly because they attend the school where he teaches. "I see my children regularly in the school where I teach. I don't joke with their education. I help them with their homework and I make sure I do all that is necessary to give them the best education." This is relevant to my research question one, which describes the involvement of parents in homework, and research question two, which examines the connection between home and school in promoting parent involvement in their children's education.

Looking at the responses from the parents' questionnaires, almost all the parents responded that they support their children's education; that their primary concern about their children's education is not only in the payment of school fees but also in assisting their children to tackle problems on their school work at home. They ask their children about their performances in their school work when they get home. An example of the 20% of parents who do not fully support their children's education are Mrs. Ibidun, whose children attend a state school, and Mrs. Agbologun, whose children attend a private school. These two parents, because

of some personal health issues and financial reasons, are not able to provide full support to their children's learning.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Parents' Relationship with Students and Teachers: Homework

This theme answers the question of the cordial relationship of parents with their children and their teachers. This is to evaluate further research question one about parental involvement with schooling. It examines the kind of cordial relationship that exists between parents and their children, how close the relationship is in the family, and the things that bind this relationship, like some things they do together that indicate this close relationship. The parents' responses indicate that they have a cordial relationship with their children because they do create time to have some activities together, like sharing evening meals, discussion time for some important family issues, general house cleaning like sweeping and mopping, and going for evangelism together with other members of the family. The parents expressed that there exists a cordial relationship in the family because of the love that binds them together. About 65% of the parents interviewed responded that doing things together as one family has encouraged them to have a sense of belonging, and has also contributed greatly to their involvement in their children's education, especially in the area of homework. This is why this theme also answers my research question number one, which examines how parents get more involved and perform more effectively with students' homework.

Their involvement in their children's education through spending quality meal time together at the table to discuss what is going on in their children's lives contributes to student success in school. Mr. Peters Anderson, whose children attend a private school, said that he is very close to his wife and children. He reported that he does not joke with his children, and he takes proper care of his family. His children are very free with him, and it helps the relationship

in the family to be cordial. He said he deliberately lets the children be free with him because he does not want the experience he grew up with when he was living with his uncle to repeat itself. He said that he was not allowed to ask questions. "I and my wife and children are very fond of each other. We do things in unison. I am not strict with my children. I relate with them as brother and sister so that they can be free to discuss anything that is bothering them with me. I do this because I do not want them to grow up having the same experience that I had with my uncle."

Mr. Charles Obiora is a family man who believes in family values. His children attend a state school. He reported that the relationship between him and his children is relational. He always has prayer with the children before they go to bed and before stepping out. He said he follows his parents' footsteps in training his children. He explained further that his parents knitted all his brothers and sisters together; likewise, he wants all his children to move closer in doing things together. Mrs. Chinwe Amarachi reported that the relationship that exists between herself and the children who attend private school is cordial. She and members of her family do all things together, except that they do not watch television together because of the differences in TV programs for children and adults. This example of home values is related to my research question number two, which addresses the home and school connection.

Mrs. Nwokeji, whose children attend a private school, said that despite the fact that her family is young, she has taught the children to do things together; and by doing so there is cohesion in the family. "I have two kids, one is nine and the other is twelve years old. Right from their early age, I have taught them the need to be united in the family. They eat together, watch TV programs together, do homework together though they are in different classes, play and pray together. This is a way of keeping the family united." Mr. Akinolu has a good relationship with his children, who attend a state school. He believes his family gets along with each other by

tolerating each other. Mr. Akinolu plays football and Ludo, and prays and eats together with his children.

About four of the parents who responded to the questionnaires indicated that they have built their relationship with their children by doing some of the following activities, such as learning at home. They read together at home with their children, they help in the organization of time, e.g., they monitor their children's morning and bedtime schedule, they check their homework assignments, and they help review their children's school work before examination time.

4.2.3 Theme 3: The Importance of Culture

Looking at the impact of culture on the educational performance of students, this theme addresses research question one, in terms of what parts of the culture the parents want their children to continue with, and which parts they do not want them to continue with. About 70% of the parents interviewed believe that cultural norms are essential ingredients of parental involvement in children's education. So, one cannot underplay the role of culture, i.e., the ways of life of people when examining the role of parents and its impact on their children's learning. Highlighting the role of parents, this theme is related to my research question number one. The same percentage of parents interviewed (70%) said that the part of the culture they want their children to maintain is respect of elders and tolerance of one another.

In one of the themes already mentioned, I highlighted "respect" as one of the characteristics of the children interviewed which has contributed to student success. The parents also want their children to be able to accommodate each other's differences. They want their children to be able to move closer to each other; even if they go abroad, they should come home to stay together. The parents want the children to continue with communal living and seeing

everybody as one family. They want their children to be closer to God, and to believe in Him only. Since the parents believe in the culture, they want their children also to follow suit, and because of that, Mrs. Chioma, whose children attend a state school, said she sometimes takes her children to the village so that they can learn the culture from its roots. Mrs. Nwokija explained that she wants her children to continue with hard work and the culture of cleanliness. Mrs. Oni, whose children attend a private school, wants her children to continue with the Yoruba language, eat local food, and wear local dress, and she does not want them to believe in the unfounded part of the culture and its taboos. Here is an excerpt from her interview: "I am from Ogbomosho, and as a Yoruba woman, my parents taught me Yoruba tradition and culture in the areas of respect for elderly ones, speaking the language, dressing in the Yoruba Iro and buba, eating amala and obe gbegiri (the traditional food). I grew up to love it and this I have taught my children."

The aspect of the culture Mr. Chinedu does not want his children, who also go to a private school, to continue with is forbidding female children from being educated. He desired his children to continue with the part of the culture that dwells on the issue of respect of one's elders. Mrs. Vera does not want her children to continue with any practices that are not biblical, but they should rather continue with those ones that are biblical. She also emphasized moderate dressing.

About 30% of the remaining parents do not fully agree with the idea of cultural norms being essential ingredients of parenting. They narrated their experience with their children on the negative effects of cultural affinity on their children's lives when they visit their village during the festive periods. Mrs. Abanihe, whose children attend a private school, and Mrs. Komolafe, whose children attend a state school, explained what the masquerade in their village does to their children when they go for the yam festival. The masquerade ties their daughters to the shrine,

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where they are to perform some sacrifices for the events, and asks them to pour some libations to their gods. This experience had some negative effects on the girls for some periods of time before they can get out of it. It affects them psychologically in their performances in school.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Child Rearing Practices

This theme reflects the parents' descriptions of their childrearing practices according to their cultural background; what attributes they think contribute to parent involvement in schooling and are the most important in raising children in their household; and how these attributes contribute to the students' educational performance. About 55% of the parents interviewed opined that upholding the attributes of humility and honesty will help their involvement in their children's education. Most of the parents responded by saying that they believe that the key attribute of rearing children is the fear of God, so they train their children in the ways of the Lord. They support the idea of raising children in collaboration with their neighbors as Africans. This is because they believe that the responsibility of raising a child is a community affair; it is not solely that of one person. Thus, they appreciate the neighbors for scolding the children when they do anything wrong if the parents are not around.

The parents believe that the best practices in rearing children are to be honest and humble, and to show respect to the elders. They teach the children to respect their seniors and to show respect to one another, believing that this will help them achieve the best in life. Parenting practices that highlight the values of respect, honesty, and moral uprightness are the essential attributes of the children interviewed; and these contribute to their student outcomes. This further highlights my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling and is related to my research questions numbers one and two.

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Mr. Peters Anderson trains his children to be disciplined, saying he does not compromise with indiscipline. He claims education is the culture of his ethnic group, as an indigene of Ondo State. Mr. Peters promises to make sure his children get the best education. "As a Yoruba man who come from Ondo State, I give high preference to education and I will do everything possible to make sure my children are well educated. As a disciplinarian, I do not condole (tolerate) any form of indiscipline from my children. I teach them to be respectful." Mr. Ademola adopts both traditional and modern methods to rear his children by giving adequate spacing in between the children's birth. He makes sure his children were breastfed for 18 months and are God fearing. Mrs. Onome, whose child attends a state school, said that in the case of her child rearing, she upholds morality, good virtue, and truthfulness; all these, Mrs. Onome admitted, contribute to the educational achievement of the children. About 80% of the parents' responses to the questionnaires indicate that child rearing practices can influence parents' involvement in their wards' education. This is because they believe that there is the need to check children's school work at home, that parents should support in providing funding for schools for the benefit of their children, that there is the need to take the education of their children seriously, and that students' performance depends on how the parents support the child.

4.2.5 Theme 5: Discipline and Household Chores: Homework

The respondents said that they usually discipline the children once they do something wrong, such as not completing homework or disobeying the house rules that guide the essential functions of house chores, and they later dialogue with them, so that they will know the reason why they are being disciplined. They believe in using the rod rather than sparing the child. About 80 % of the parents interviewed believe that discipline and equal distribution of house chores among the children are important components of parenting. This is because the theme of

discipline explained the roles of parents in making sure their children get the right kind of education with the right kind of attitude and moral character, and this is related to my research question number one. The theme of house chores emphasizes the importance of incorporating home values in the education of children, and this is relevant to my research question number two. Parents get involved in their children's education by making sure the children put up their best behaviors all the time.

The parents emphasized that discipline in the home should be done in such a way that the punishment given is commensurable with the offence committed. They believe that it is both parents who should discipline the children. Depending on the severity of the offense, they used to flog the children, but most of the time, they dialogue with them. Barrister Enwereonu, whose children attend a private school, does not fully believe in flogging to correct wrong doings, but she believes in dialogue. She only uses a cane as a last resort. From the excerpt from the interview, she had this to say, "As a lawyer who deals with a lot of different criminal cases, I believe in dialogue with my clients and I listened a lot to them. With sympathetic listening heart, I have helped a lot of my clients. This approach I used with my three children at home. To solve any conflict at home, I always first talk with the kids and listen to their own side of the stories. I only resort to cane as the last resort when I see that they need to be corrected in such a manner." The first thing Mr. Chucks does to discipline his children, who also attend a private school, is to deprive them of those things they like to do, most especially watching cartoons. Mrs. Nwokija believes that if the foundation is well laid, flogging is totally off everyday use. She disciplines the children to kneel down for some minutes, and she explains to them the reasons why they should not repeat such a behavior again. Mr. Nana reported that he makes sure that his

disciplinary actions are always corrective in nature through scolding. "I do not flog my children anytime they misbehave, rather I talk to them harshly!"

Concerning chores, Mr. Olarenwaju, whose children attend a state school, reported that gender does not determine the house chores the children perform because it is their responsibility to make sure the house is clean. Mr. Daniel Amokachi noted that household chores are shared according to the age and gender among his children. The children do general house cleaning – sweeping, washing dishes, and cooking. Mrs. Onome said she lays much emphasis on equality; everybody in the family has one function or the other to do; more importantly, the girl child is taught how to cook and take care of the kitchen.

The remaining 20% of parents do not fully believe that household chores should be based on gender equality; rather, it should be based on the ability of the children and the parents' discretion. Mrs. Agunbiaje, whose children attend a private school, explained that when she is distributing the house chores to her children, she looks at their abilities and what each child's interest lies in. She said she does not necessarily look at their gender as a factor that contributes effectively to parental involvement because that does not help her in her decision making.

4.2.6 Theme 6: Education Is Necessary for Success: Motivation

The parents expressed that education is very important because it opens a lot of windows of opportunities for them. They said that education is very important because it produces the results of what they are enjoying today. They said that nothing could be achieved without a standard education; therefore, education is very important. This further highlights the degree of importance of the theme of "educational support," which about all of the parents interviewed agreed to. The parents interviewed reported that they support their children's learning morally, financially, emotionally, socially, and most importantly in the areas of helping with homework;

and this explains a child's motivation to succeed in school. This is related to my research question number one, which examines parental support in students' homework, which is an example of my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling. Although Mr. Wola, whose children attend a state school, is not comfortable with the current educational system in Nigeria because the standard of education has fallen, he still believes that nothing could be achieved without a quality education. Here is an excerpt from his interview: "The Nigerian educational system has a lot of challenges. The tertiary institutions are nothing to write home about. The standard of education has fallen. However, we will still be hoping for the best because nothing can be achieved without a good education."

Mr. Nana, whose children also attend a state school, believes education is also very important in the life of any society, and he is also not satisfied with the current Nigerian educational system because of its lack of adequate infrastructure and teachers, and issues of student indiscipline and cultism. Quoting him, he had this to say: "Education is highly essential in our society for any human development. The problem is that our schools lack the necessary infrastructure and no adequate number of qualified teachers." Mr. Akin believes that any man wanting to become anything in life needs a good education. He is not comfortable with the Nigerian educational system because the government does not involve the right people in the development of the school curriculum, and this is seriously affecting the educational system. Mr. Chinedu, whose child attends a private school, explained that education is the wire of life, without which one cannot go far. Mr. Chinedu explained that those individuals who are not educated in the country are the ones causing problems for Nigeria. He said that educational standards have started falling due to corruption. "The quality of education in the country has

started fallen and the problem we are having in the country were masterminded by those people who do not have enough education."

Barrister Enwereonu said that education is very important to her because she believes that an educated person motivates the ignorant to get educated. She emphatically stated that the Nigerian educational system is good; only the area of sponsorship is faulty. Mrs. Onome opined that education is very important to anything one wants to achieve in life, so education should not be handled with levity. However, she is not comfortable with the Nigerian educational system, due to incessant strikes by the university lecturers. Mr. Anderson believes that the educational system in Nigeria is developing, and he admonishes parents to support government in the education of their children. He said if the government and the parents could collaborate together, the level of education would certainly improve.

From the parents' questionnaires responses, all five parents who completed the questionnaire indicated that education is very important for their children' success, and they support their children's education in the following ways: by providing a conducive environment for learning at home, e.g., a study room with a good table and chair; by providing textbooks, good nourishing meals for the child, and school materials, e.g., uniform, school bag, and shoes; and by buying books for one's home library

4.2.7 Theme 7: Expectations of Parents for Their Children: Motivation

This theme explains that parents have high expectations for their children by ensuring that their children receive a quality education. And because of parental educational support, students are motivated to learn and succeed in school. About 90% of the respondents' expectations are that they expect their children to excel in their education and to be able to cope with the situation of the country, because they believe it is through education that you can

achieve anything nowadays in Nigeria. Because of the parents' role in making sure their children get quality education, they have high expectations for their children, and this answers my research question number one, which looks at the roles parents living in Lagos and in Ibadan play in the education of their children. Believing that children have the opportunity to attain any level they want, Mr. Akin gives opportunity to his children, and he expects them to excel in it. Mr. Ola hopes his children, who attend private school, could get at least their first degree, and if they wish to continue, he will gladly support them. Mrs. Jennifer expects all her children, who attend a private school, to pursue any profession of their interest, and she vows to provide everything that is required for them to succeed. She wants her children to achieve the highest level in their chosen career.

For Mrs. Chinwe Amarachi, whose children attend a private school, she said each child has different ability; because of that, she would not force any profession on her children, but instead would allow them to make their own choices. She expects her children to reach the Master's degree level, after which they can make a choice whether to proceed or not. "Each child is unique and because of their different abilities, I will allow them to make their own choice of career. I will not force any profession on them." Mr. Chucks' expectation for his children is how to read, because he believes that this would enhance their performances as they go higher. He wants his children to go as far as having their PhD, and he does not like to force any profession on them. Mrs. Antonia wants her children, who attend a state school, to be somebody to reckon with in the future, so that she could rest assured that she is not wasting her money on them. Mrs. Antonia also wants her children to go as far as having their PhD in their chosen field. From the parents' questionnaires, three of the parents that filled out the questionnaire responses indicated that they want their children to get their first degree, and if possible get their Master's

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degree. Then they can then decide on their own if they want to go study for their PhD or other advanced degree.

The remaining 10% of the parents did not have any expectations for their children. Rather they said that they believe that their children will take each day as it comes. They will learn to deal with realities of life and the daily challenges of life.

4.2.8 Theme 8: Role of Parents: Help with Homework

More than 65% of the parents believed that their roles, which include helping with homework, should complement that of the school. Mrs. Chinwe Amarachi explained that the role of parents should not stop in payment of school fees; they should also cooperate with their teachers in training the children. Mrs. Onome believes that the role of parents in children's education cannot be over-emphasized. She opined that the parents should start where the teachers stopped in school. Mr. Andrew explained that parents should complement the effort of the teachers in teaching their children. He believes that education is not limited to school activities alone. Barrister Enwereonu reported that the responsibility of the parents is not only to send their children to school, but also to get involved in teaching their children good morals, so that they can behave well in society. "The duty of the parents goes beyond sending their children to school. Their role also includes teaching their children good morals and how they ought to behave in the larger society." Mr. Amechi reported that parents and teachers should be in partnership toward the education of children. He observed that the responsibility of children should not be left with the teachers only. Mrs. Ayorinde, whose children attend a private school, believes parents have many roles to play in the life of their children. She noted that the mother has the greatest role to play in the physical and moral development of the child. "Parents had

many responsibilities when it comes to children's lives. The mothers especially have a major part to play when it comes to the physical and moral development of the child."

All these parents' responses are relevant to my research questions number one and two, which look at the role of parents and the parts that parents play in the home and with teachers at school in promoting the education of students. This further highlights my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling. All five parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that their roles as parents in the area of learning at home is to help their children with homework, read together with them in some difficult subjects, help with school projects, help to check or monitor homework assignments, give supplementary work at home to support the school work, and if possible, hire a home tutor for their child in the areas that need improvement.

4.2.9 Theme 9: Role of School

Looking at the role of schools in educating children, this theme is related to my research question number two, which examines the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children. 70% of the parents mentioned that the school has a very important role to play in children's education. Mrs. Ayorinde, whose children attend a state school, believes that the government has a greater role to play in the education of the children because there are no good facilities for teaching, and the classes are also overcrowded, which are factors that are not making the school conducive for learning. Mr. Akinolu said children need to learn school character and behavior from their teachers, who are supposed to be their role models. Since school is a place where certain infrastructures are put in place for comfortable learning, Mrs. Amarachi opined that the school has the responsibility to provide all learning infrastructures. "In all ramifications, the school ought to be a conducive learning environment where students can

learn with ease. Hence, the school has the duty to make sure all learning materials are available for any teaching to take place."

Mrs. Onome defines the school as the official environment for educating children; in this regard, the school should provide all the materials needed for learning, and the curriculum should strictly and religiously be followed. Mr. Wola explained that schools are to make sure the children are well tutored so that they can perform best wherever they find themselves. Mrs. Nonso, whose child attends a private school said the school should find the level of assimilation in children because they come from different backgrounds. Mrs. Aremu wants school management to employ competent hands, and she believes that the teachers should follow the school curriculum in teaching the students. "The school board of directors should make sure qualified teachers are employed and also make sure that the teachers follow the school curriculum in their teaching."

About 80% of the parents' questionnaire responses indicated that the role of the school in educating children is to make sure that the government provides basic education for the children. Also, the school in support of the parents should raise funds for the school's development. The parents' questionnaire responses further indicated that concerned parents should not wait for government only to provide the basic needs for their children to go to school. This is because, they argued, if parents should help in the provision of necessary school materials, students' performance will improve.

4.3 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Teachers' Interview Responses

Table 4 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Teachers' Interview Responses

Theme 1	Teachers' Motivation in the Teaching Profession
Theme 2	Teachers' Teaching Experience
Theme 3	Role of the School
Theme 4	Challenges Teachers Face in Teaching Profession–Educational Barriers
Theme 5	Experience Working with a Diverse Population of Students
Theme 6	Teachers' Educational Support for Students : Motivation
Theme 7	Teachers' Collaborative Relationship with Parents : Homework
Theme 8	Teachers' Communication with Parents

Motivation from the teachers' perspective cannot be over emphasized when talking about parental involvement in children's education. Teachers spend quality time with students because they are passionate about the '*craft*' of teaching.

In the essence of *theme 1*, being a teacher is not just talking to students; it is highly interactive and action oriented. It is a *craft*. But most importantly, it is love that sets apart one teacher from another. Teachers' positive experiences as reflected from their student's educational outcomes encourages the teachers to develop continuous interest in teaching. In t*heme 2*, the notion of teachers' motivation plants not only the seed of success into their students' minds, but more importantly inspires them to a greater level of success. Hence, the role of the school in building a parent-school relationship, in the overview of *theme 3*, highlights the importance of school involvement in encouraging parents' participation in school academic and events programs. The challenges that teachers face are due to many factors. Two of the most important factors that were addressed in *theme 4* by the interviewed teachers are the lack of adequate teaching facilities and the problem of the theoretical applications of the curriculum, as opposed to practical skills and involvement. Teaching students from different ethnic

backgrounds enriches teachers' holistic experience, as described in *theme 5*, which promotes the effectiveness of the teachers' pedagogical approach to effective teaching.

The teachers all agreed about the importance of support for students. In helping special needs students, or those from broken homes who have difficulties in adjusting to the culture of the school environment, the teachers interviewed explained that they normally invite the parents to the school and discuss the best way to provide support to them and their child (*theme 6*). In doing this, the teachers are able to establish a collaborative relationship with the parents who support in their children's homework, which is the essence of *theme 7*. Realizing that parents have a very important role to play in their children's schooling, the teachers interviewed opined that they communicate with the parents mostly to inform them about their children's academic progress. This promotes parent-teacher relationship in children's' learning. T*heme 8* on communication highlights that effective teachers' communication with parents improves students' performance in homework; and it also reiterates that both parents and the school are co-partners in a child's academic success.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Teachers' Motivation in the Teaching Profession

Teachers play a very important role in the educational lives of their students. They are the "second parents" to these students. Students spend a substantial part of their time with their teachers in school. In most cases, teachers are students' confidants. Therefore, in talking about parental involvement in children's education, teachers' roles cannot be underplayed. This is related to my research question number two, which addresses the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children. Here, 90% of the teachers interviewed expressed what has kept them in the teaching profession. Some of them see teaching as a very lively and

noble profession. They were prompted to become a teacher because of their love for children and the desire to see children become very great in life.

Mrs. Oba, who teaches in a private school, was motivated to become a teacher so that she could be able to impact the knowledge of children, so that they would be great in the future. She saw teaching as a way in which she could contribute her quota to society; and she believes when she is old she will be able to boast of the children she contributed to the greatness of their lives. "My passion for teaching stems from my desire to wanting to contribute to the educational goals of students, both for immediate rewards and for future benefits. I see the teaching profession as a way of giving back to the society, by teaching children who are the future leaders of tomorrow. It is my happiness when I grow old to see the students I taught becoming somebody to reckon with in the society."

Mr. Akin, who teaches in a state school, was motivated to become a teacher in a bid to correct the way punishments are meted out to erring students. He gave a typical example of one of his teachers in the primary school that he attended. The teacher's view of the use of severe punishment was intolerable. He gave tough punishments to students as a way of correcting their bad behaviors. For example, he asked the students to clear quite a piece of agricultural farm, or asked the students to kneel down for a couple of hours in the sun.

Mr. Wola, also from a state school, perceived teaching as a profession that would last. He opted for teaching because he believed there is no way a teacher will not get a job. For Mrs. Ali, who teaches in a private school, her decision to become a teacher was influenced by her parents, and her love for the profession grew stronger when she gained admission into the College of Education. Mrs. Oye, who teaches in a state school, got the motivation to become a teacher from her husband. Her husband was a trained teacher, and he always mentioned how

great the teaching profession is and how he would appreciate his wife becoming a teacher. Later, Mrs. Oye started to have interactions with little children during her leisure time, during which she would also counsel them on several other issues and not merely chat with them. "My interest in teaching developed through the motivation of my husband. He encouraged me to like the teaching profession. Being an experienced teacher himself, he was always telling me how noble the teaching profession was." Mr. Ade and Mr. Eze, both from private schools, said they believed it was destiny that took them into the teaching profession. They had initially aspired to a different profession, but they found themselves doing very well as a teacher.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Teachers' Teaching Experience

About 90% of the teachers interviewed expressed positive experiences in their teaching career, and this contributed immensely to their involvement in the education of their students. This is also an example of my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling, and it is an element of research question number two, which focuses, however, more on the role of teachers. Mrs. Lafe, who teaches in a state school, explained that the positive experience of teaching is to know that as a teacher you have the lives of children in your hand, and that you have an important role to play to ensure that these children become great in the future. The teacher plays a significant role in modeling the lives of children. She believes that the negative aspect of teaching is the moral decadence in society, which is acting like a virus that is killing the sanctity in students as found in most schools. Mrs. Oba's positive teaching experience from a private school is the joy she derived in seeing that students speak English fluently and perform well in their academics. The negative teaching experiences as described by her were the students that are very difficult to mold, which is caused by the diverse backgrounds from which they came. "My positive experience as a teacher is the happiness I experienced when I see that my students are

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able to communicate fluently in English Language. The negative experience is that some of the students were difficult to mold due to the different cultural backgrounds from which they came from." For Mr. Ade, from a state school, the negative experience he had was the poor value that the government placed on the teaching profession, through the delay in the payment of salaries of teachers. Mr. Ade said, "The government has relegated the teaching profession. They do not pay teachers' salary regularly and because of this, those in the profession engage in other business outside of the school to make ends meet."

Mrs. Oye noted that her positive experience is the social status accorded her as a teacher because she is well respected in her neighborhood. However, Mrs. Oye has fear for the future of the teaching profession, based on the social vices that are on the increase among students, which include cultism, violence, and beating up teachers. Mr. Wola narrated his positive experience as when he was nominated as the school registrar, which afforded him the opportunity to meet with the top people in the school. His negative experience related to when the students became unable at times to follow the school rules, and this usually placed him on a collision course with the parents and the school authority.

Mr. Kehinde who teaches in a private school, explained that his positive experiences emanate when he sees his students passing their qualifying examinations, such as WAEC, JAMB, or NECO, and going to the university. For his negative experiences, Mr. Kehinde expressed that the salary is not commensurate with the demands of the teaching profession. He also mentioned the lack of cooperation from parents concerning the provision of resources that would facilitate learning by students, particularly textbooks. He added that he is also demoralized by the act of truancy that is increasing among the students. "In my teaching career, I am very happy whenever I see my students passing their final examinations. On the negative

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side, the parents are not working collaboratively with the school in making sure they provide all the books necessary for their children. Another negative experience is that the teachers' salary is nothing to write home about." The parent and school collaboration highlighted in this theme is related to my research question number two, which examines the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children.

Mrs. Pelu, who also teaches in a private school, explained that a thin line exists between her positive and negative experiences. She is encouraged when students take interest in her lessons, and she experiences a negative feeling when the students are not interested in what she is teaching them. The experience that is positive for Mr. Anthony, from a state school, is the results he gets when he does things at the right time, while the negative experience is the negative attitude of students to teaching that include the use of mobile phones, which hinder them from concentrating in class.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Role of the School

Highlighting the role of the school in promoting parental involvement, the teachers explained that the school has a role to play in educating parents on what is expected from them to facilitate learning for the students. About 85% of the teachers interviewed observed that teachers need to work hand-in-hand with parents to achieve positive results in students' learning and academic performance. This theme emphasizes the role of teachers on the part of the school and role of parents on the part of home, which is related to my research question number two, which describes the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children. Mr. Ade, who teaches in a state school, reported that the school motivates the parents to get involved in their children's education by communicating with them in many ways, including sending circulars through the students, sending announcements in the media, and involvement of

community leaders. Mr. Wola explained that the statutory role of the school is to involve the parents in the education of their children, so that parents could continue monitoring progress where the school stops, particularly for those students who are not performing well.

Mrs. Oye mentioned that the school gets the attention of parents by inviting them to meetings and discussions on the attitude and performances of their wards in school. She observed that the school has important roles to play, particularly for children with dual behavior, that is, those who put up good behavior at home and the opposite in the school. Mr. Boye, who teaches in a private school, believes that the school should carry the parents along because students spend more time in school. He observed that the school should be able to feed the parents on the character deficiency, the academic deficiency, and the spiritual life of students. "Since it is the case that the students spend more time with the teachers, they are in good position to inform the parents about the attitudes of their children." Sharing a similar view with Mr. Boye, Mr. Kehinde reported that the school instituted the PTA to maintain a cordial relationship between the parents and the teachers for progress in the academics of students. Mr. Kehinde explained that the students spend most of their time of the day with teachers in the school, rather than with their parents at home; as a result, the teachers know the students better than their parents do. In this way, he disclosed that any abnormal behavior in students is easily communicated to the parents.

Mr. Pelu reported that the school uses PTA meetings as a medium to encourage parents to monitor their children, both at home and in the school, and to pay visits to their teachers to follow up on their children's performances. Here is an excerpt from the interview: "The school introduced PTA meetings in the school so that it will be an avenue for parents to meet the teachers to know the progress of their children's school work. Through this means, the parents

are informed of what is going on in the school." Mr. Anthony disclosed that the responsibility of the school is to keep all the necessary information for the parents, which would be used to carry them along with the progress in the education of the children.

Emphasizing communication and using his school as an example, Mr. Gregory, from a state school, mentioned that information about students' performance is relayed to their parents through e-mails and phone calls, since the school has a registry for that. Mrs. Oba reported that it is the duty of the school to inform parents of the needs and performances of their wards through PTA meetings, which should be called periodically at the initiative of the school authority.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Challenges Teachers Face in Teaching Profession-Educational Barriers

Evaluating the themes discussed so far, there are clear examples of the themes of "educational support" and "education is necessary for success" co-occurring with the theme of "challenges" the teachers face in their involvement in their students' education. About 75% of the teachers interviewed expressed the challenges they encounter in their teaching responsibility. Mrs. Lafe, from a state school, observed that the greatest challenge she faces as a teacher is the large number of students in a class, which hinders the effectiveness of the teacher-learning process in many ways, including the inability to relate on an individual basis with the students, and the loss of control over the proceedings in the class. She narrated that most often the students at the back of the class engage themselves in other things, apart from listening to the teacher. "The major challenge I experience in my teaching is the large number of students in a class. Because of the increase in the number of students in a class, it makes effective teaching difficult because it is difficult to control the students."

Mrs. Oba identified that peer pressure is a major challenge she faces as a teacher. She noted that it is easy for peers to influence students negatively, which is not easily detected in the students until it is too late to correct. She is of the opinion that pressure from bad friends is very

difficult to eradicate among students. Mr. Ade identified the following challenges: lack of textbooks, students not writing notes in class, poor monitoring of students' activities by parents, truancy, large student population, and discipline in the school. Mrs. Oye attributed the challenges she faces in school to the lack of cooperation among the people that make up the teaching environment, who are parents, teachers, students, and the government. She explained that due to lack of cooperation on the part of the parents, students see teachers who try to enforce discipline in the school as being wicked. She believed that failure on the part of any of these groups of people in discharging their responsibility is evident as failure of the education system. "The challenge I face in school is lack of cooperation among the parents, teachers, students, and the government. Students saw any teacher who tried to enforce discipline as being mean. The failure in the educational system could be attributed to the failure on the part of the government and the school in discharging their duty."

Mr. Anthony and Mrs. Pelu identified lack of support from parents, and truancy and stubbornness among some of the students, as the challenges they face in teaching students. They explained that the bad students are successfully corrupting the good ones. Mr. Aremu, who teaches in a state school, explained that the main challenge the school is facing is the issue of facilities. He mentioned that due to inadequate facilities, the curriculum is more theoretical than practical, which denies students the ability to adapt the mathematical theories to real life applications. According to Mr. Gregory, the greatest challenge students are having nowadays is distraction caused by love for money. He explained that teenagers today do not have passion for education as the bedrock for success in life. He further explained that students make comparisons that some of the rich people they see around are not educated.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Experience Working with a Diverse Population of Students

In describing their experiences working with a diverse population of students, some of the teachers interviewed describe working with students as interesting, especially when they see the students they have taught becoming someone great in society. This relationship between teachers and students highlights the importance of research question number two, which describes the connection between home and school. Mr. Ade has had mixed experience working with students. He has been happy in certain cases, for example, when a student of the school had the overall best result in the state exams two years ago. He explained that the recurring social vices among students, such as truancy and other actions that disturb the community peace, constitute his bad experience as a teacher.

Mr. Ade wants to see his students in higher places than he is, and he believes that students have the potentials to become great in life only if they really want to. He further explained that some of the students really appreciate the worth of a good teacher. He mentioned that he was once approached by a student who appreciated his fluency in English, despite being an Agricultural Science Teacher. Mr. Ade mentioned that because he was encouraged by this act, he has had to exercise restraints at times from giving monetary rewards to students who put up good academic performance and moral behavior in the school.

Mr. Kehinde described his experience with students as being a mixed kind of experience. He explained that he is always very proud of those students who are diligent in their studies. He explained that students always express their ugly traits when they are close to the teacher. On the contrary, he explained that there are also consequences if the teacher is too far away from the students. He expected that students should have good moral behavior and should strive to be sound in their academics.

Mr. Kehinde mentioned that the diverse backgrounds of students have impacts on their readiness to learn. For him, parents' socio-economic status, such as financial power and educational status, which confer a form of social and cultural capital, has influence on the students' performance in the school. He added that the parents of students who do not bother to monitor their children's progress are fond of saying that education does not bring immediate reward. "The different backgrounds which the students came from has an impact on the students' willingness to learn. Also the parents' socio-economic status has an influence on the students' performance at school."

Mrs. Oye, who had been very close to some students and had been monitoring their progress, believes that the students with positive attitudes to learning are future professionals. She plays positive roles in transforming the lives of some of these students, through regular counseling sessions. She also mentioned the extra efforts she puts into ensuring the success of students in her subject in a WAEC examination. She organizes extra classes on certain topic areas that she suspects questions would cover in the qualifying examination, and the students that attend are full of appreciation.

Mr. Pelu desires that students should place getting good degrees as their ultimate goal. He explained that modern technologies are distracting students from adequate concentration on their academics. He expects students to face their education and forget about other sources of distractions, such as the use of the phone when it is not necessary. Mrs. Oba explained that students will benefit most from teachers who are disciplined and assertive. She disclosed that students act according to the instructions of those teachers who always stand by their words. She expected that those students who had teachable spirits would become leaders in society. Quoting from the excerpt from the interview, she had this to say, "Students will gain more from teachers

who keep to their words because they follow their instructions in what they do. Some of these students who are easy to teach and follow instructions are future leaders."

4.3.6 Theme 6: Teachers' Educational Support for Students: Motivation

The teachers all agreed about the importance of support for students. They explained how they support students, especially those with special needs in their classroom. Mrs. Lafe described students with special needs as those who are slow learners, those who come from broken homes, and those who hardly mix with students in the class. According to her, she usually invites such students for interaction in the staff room so as to know the actual needs of such students. She explained that such students open up because the discussion is done in the staff room and not in the class. She invites both parents of the children from broken homes in order to know how the different parties could be of help in supporting the child. She narrated that she usually gives financial assistance to the students whose challenge is feeding.

Mrs. Oba usually assessed students to know what the problem was, and then she came down to their level to help. She explained that for students who found it difficult to speak English, she helped such students by speaking the local dialect, which would enable such students to express themselves and contribute to the discussion at that time. "To be able to help any student in my class, I always assess them and come down to their level by communicating with them in the ethnic language so that they can fully express themselves. This gives them the confidence and the ability to explain their problems comprehensively."

Mr. Pelu went extra miles through personal effort and provision of resources to help students with special needs. He explained that he always ensures that his students are relaxed before he starts to teach. He encourages the students to be bold and to ask questions whenever they want to. "I make conscientious efforts to help students with special needs. I go out of my

way to provide material and financial resources to help them. I encourage them to have self-confidence and be courageous to ask questions anytime they needed to especially in the class."

Mr. Kehinde noted that he usually expresses love and at times gives stipends to help special needs students. He narrated the case of a student whose parents complained that he was becoming unserious with his academics. After much of his intervention by getting the student some school supplies, like textbooks and a few notebooks, he explained that the student regained his performance and was able to catch up with the rest of the class. This specific response is an example of my study's focus on parental involvement with teachers in schooling, and it is related to my research question number two that examines the level of parents' involvement and performance in their involvement with students' work and the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children.

According to Mr. Ade, he always tries first to identify the challenges of the students before seeking solutions to their problems. He described the case of a student with a heart problem, whom he was able to identify through interaction because the student was always trembling. He reported the case to the school authority, and the parents were invited. Mr. Ade described a scenario in which the school contributed a sum of four hundred thousand naira to offset the medical bill of a student who had an accident within the school premises. Mr. Anthony creates extra time for personal lessons for students with special needs.

4.3.7 Theme 7: Teachers' Collaborative Relationship with Parents: Homework

The teachers interviewed expressed that they were able to establish a collaborative relationship with the parents who supported their children with their homework. In trying to establish a network of relationship with parents, about 85% of the teachers interviewed explained why they have to communicate with parents. This is because they realize that parents have a very

important role to play in their children's schooling, which is relevant to my research question number one about the roles of parents in the education of their children. This also refers to research question number two, because it also shows reference to teachers in their relationship with parents. Mrs. Lafe's relationship with parents is mainly on the academic progress and moral behavior of the students. She interacts with the parents that attend the open day of the school, collects their phone numbers, and discusses the progress of such students with the parents on the phone. She reported that she prefers to invite concerned parents on the phone if there is a need, because such invitations are never delivered if sent through the students.

Mr. Gregory explained that the need to communicate with parents usually arise when there is recurring bad behavior, or the student is sick. He clarified that the most efficient ways to communicate with parents is through e-mail and by text messaging. Mr. Gregory reported that letters are not effective because they do not get to the parents, either through deliberate action by the students or because the parents are not around. He communicates with the parents of students every Friday through e-mails and phone calls, to brief them about the wards' performances and to obtain feedback. "Through e-mails and phone calls, I communicate with the parents concerning the academic progress of their children and when any of the students misbehaved. The most efficient way to contact parents is through e-mails and text messages. Sending mails through the students is not effective. In most cases, the students do not give the letters to their parents."

Mr. Kehinde maintains a mutual relationship with parents because of his belief that both the teacher and the parents play important roles in the education of students and in the achievement of desired results. This is relevant to my research question number two, which addresses the connection between home and school in promoting children's education. Mr. Ade

and Mrs. Oba reported that they maintain a harmonious relationship with parents. They explained that they strictly maintain a communication relationship with the parents of the students. They give their phone numbers to the parents so that they can be reached for any intervention in the event that a student is not behaving well at home. Mr. Aremu explained that parents determine the extent to which he relates with them; and that the primary purpose of establishing relationships with parents is to provide feedback on the performance of their children. "The parents are the one who determined the extent to which I communicate with them and the primary purpose of my communicating with parents is to give them feedback on the progress of their child." Mr. Pelu maintains good relationships with the parents by having regular discussions and by giving them words of encouragements whenever the opportunity arises.

4.3.8 Theme 8: Teachers' Communication with Parents

About 85% of the teachers interviewed agreed that effective communication is very important for the parent-teacher relationship in children's education, which is relevant to research question number two. This theme of communication reiterates the need for parents to communicate frequently with the school authority, which further emphasizes that both the parents and the school are active participants in the education of the students. In explaining how often teachers communicates with parents and the most efficient way to communicate with parents, Mrs. Lafe described the depth of her communication with parents as gender-based. As a woman, she tries as much as possible to avoid interaction with fathers because of life experiences. She prefers communicating with the mothers. She communicates mostly by inviting the parents on the phone to discuss issues pertaining to their children. Mrs. Lafe mentioned that parents are also free to come on their own free will. She invites parents when there is a gross misconduct by a student, or to interact and counsel parents on how to improve the academic

performance of their children. She also communicates with parents to foster ways of providing enabling environments for students to study at home. "I mostly invite parents by phone to discuss any issues related to their child's academic progress and when there is a misconduct of behavior by the child at home. I also discuss the best way to create an enabling environment for study with the parents any time I call them or they come to the school during the PTA meeting."

Mr. Ade explained that communication with parents is usually enhanced in the PTA meetings that are held twice in a term. He communicates with parents using their contact information, which is available in the school. He described that the efficient way of communicating with parents is through face- to-face interaction, which he said gives better results and discussions than on the phone. Mrs. Oba usually calls the attention of parents to changes she notices in the students. She described the phone as the quickest medium that she uses to reach parents. "To me, the fastest way to get in touch with the parents if I noticed any unusual changes in the students is through the phone and this means has been very helpful." Mrs. Oba was usually prompted to reach parents when students were engaging in behaviors such as truancy.

Mr. Wola has the phone numbers of all the parents of students in his class, which enables him to reach them whenever their children are involved in bad behaviors. He involves parents whenever their children are involved in stealing, gambling, and other social vices. Mr. Kehinde calls parents as often as circumstances warrant it. He also describes face- to- face discussion as the best way of communicating with parents. The circumstances that could prompt Mr. Kehinde to communicate with parents include financial matters and meeting the other needs of a child in cases of disobedience and joining bad gangs. Mr. Anthony is usually pressed to contact parents

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whenever a student's academic performance is going down, or when he notices the emergence of specific misbehaviors.

Mr. Aremu mentioned that the depth of his communication with parents is determined by the existing relationship and the needs of the student. This contact with parents emphasizes the importance of research question number two in this discussion. He reported that the most efficient way by which he communicates with parents is through phone calls. Mr. Aremu calls parents when students are owing school fees or boycotting classes, or not doing well academically. According to him, he does this to ensure that students are not facing psychological problems. "The needs of the students determined the extent to which I communicate with their parents. For example, I call the parents when the child has not paid his or her school fees or when the child is performing poorly in his or her studies." Mr. Ade and Mrs. Oba explained that PTA meetings and open day are two avenues used to involve parents in the education of their children. According to them, open day provides an opportunity for parents to look through the notebooks of their children for them to assess and pass comments.

4.4 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Principals' Interview Responses

Table 5 Themes about Parental Involvement in the Principals' Interview Responses

Theme 1	Duties /Responsibilities /Educational Support–Psychological, Emotional, Social, and Homework
Theme 2	Things Liked about Duties
Theme 3	Being a Principal is Desirable
Theme 4	Relationship with Teachers: Motivation, Homework
Theme 5	Relationship with Students: Motivation, Homework
Theme 6	Relationship with Parents : Motivation, Homework
Theme 7	Challenges Faced by the Principals
Theme 8	Expectations of the Principals

As mentioned in *theme 1*, the principal's role in connection to the relationship between parents and teachers that supports students' educational outcomes, including in the area of

homework support, reiterates the connection between home and school. Furthermore, my study

goals emphasize that principals play a very important role in the educational process that

contributes to effective parental involvement.   The principal interviewed expressed her

responsibilities in making certain that her school environment runs with the utmost safety and

smooth learning for her students. In addition, her responsibilities include the psychological,

emotional, and social stability of the students' overall fitness for learning, as discussed in *theme*

2.

The role of the principal is to make sure the curriculum is implemented in the school.

This role also embodies the school culture. The principal is the peak of the teaching profession

in the Nigerian school system, as expressed in *theme 3*. As well, the principal demonstrates a

respectable and cordial relationship with the staff, students, and parents, and he contributes to the

realization of the students' educational goals by motivating the teachers and the parents to make

sure they support the students in their homework, as expressed in *themes 4,5,* and *6*. While

maintaining a cordial relationship with staff and students, the challenges the principal faces in

the schools are the lack of cooperation from non-responsive parents. The principal's

expectations are to see students' academic achievement improve by making sure all

stakeholders (parents, teachers, and students) fulfill their obligations.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Duties/Responsibilities/Educational Support-Psychological, Emotional, Social, and Homework

Highlighting the role of the principal in the school environment further emphasizes the

importance of parent involvement in schooling, and reflects the relevance of research question

number two, which talks about the connection between home and school in promoting the

education of children. On a general note, this theme about parental involvement in the principals'

interview responses discusses the importance of research question number two, because the

theme emphasizes the connection between principals, teachers, and parents. Mrs. Tunji, from a private school, makes sure that the assembly and lessons start at the appropriate time every day. She also keeps statutory records, such as registers, schemes of work, lesson notes, and punishment and commendation books. "As the principal, I make sure the assembly and classes start at the appropriate time daily. I also keep records of the attendance books, lesson notes, and the punishment and commendation books." Mr. Famibi, from a state school, administered the school as the head, and he still teaches in class due to an inadequate numbers of teachers in the school. He teaches subjects like Integrated Science, Introductory Technology, and Physics.

All three principals interviewed agreed that the duties of a principal in the daily smooth running of the school affairs cannot be under emphasized. This highlights my study's focus on parental involvement in schooling, and the relevance of research question number two.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Things Liked about Duties

Mr. Famibi sees teaching as a profession that models life in two ways. First, for students who are ready to learn, he said that teachers enable such students to be great in the future. Second, he explained that teachers are also responsible for remodeling the lives of students who are still struggling with their academics. Mrs. Tunji believes that the responsibility is on her to enforce discipline in both the teachers and the students. "As a principal, I have the duty to instill discipline on the teachers and the students. I see this as part of my major responsibility in the school." Thus, this theme emphasizes the role of administrators in the education of children and the connection between home and school, which is the essence of research question number two.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Being a Principal Is Desirable

Mrs. Tunji explained that becoming a principal is the peak of the teaching profession, and it is also the desire of every teacher. She said, "Becoming a principal is the dream of every

teacher and it is the climax of the teaching profession." For Mr. Famibi, the post of a principal is desirable because it affords the opportunity to take responsibility in molding the lives of students and motivating teachers to impact positively in the lives of students. This theme discusses the relationship of the principal with the teachers and the students, which is part of what the parent and school relationship research question number two is about.

4.4.4 Theme 4: Relationship with Teachers: Motivation, Homework

Mr. Famibi and Mrs. Tunji described their relationship with their teachers who give students homework, as cordial. They enjoy cordial relationship with them, which enables the smooth running of the school. "We both have a good and wholesome relationship with our teachers and this has contributed to the perfect running of the school. The teachers are willing to take to corrections which is something very good on their part." This principal and teacher relationship describes the connection between the school administrators and the teaching staffs.

4.4.5 Theme 5: Relationship with Students: Motivation, Homework

Mrs. Tunji explained that the principal should be seen as a role model for the students, by supporting students in achieving their educational goals, especially in the area of homework educational support. She mentioned that she has a cordial relationship with the students. Mr. Famibi also described his relationship with his students as cordial. He narrated that some of the old students are very proud and appreciative of him whenever he meets them. Here is an excerpt from the interview: "I have a very good and pleasant relationship with my students. The good part of it is that these students were very happy that they finished from the school anytime I come across them in town." This theme also highlights the roles of school administrators in children's education and the importance of the research question number two.

4.4.6 Theme 6: Relationship with Parents: Motivation, Homework

The three principals interviewed reported that they experience a cordial relationship with those parents who support their children's homework, and they respond promptly to the call of the school whenever they are called upon. Mrs. Tunji ensured that she maintains a cordial relationship with parents through interaction in different avenues on the performance of their wards, which include the parents' forum and one-on-one discussions in the school. Mr. Famibi enjoys a very good relationship with parents who are serious about the education of their children. He explained that such parents yield the call whenever they are invited on matters that concern their children. "I have a good rapport with those parents who showed much concern about their child's education and always respond to the call whenever they were asked to come to the school." Mrs. Tunji organizes parent-teacher forums where parents are informed about the important role they play in attaining the career goals of their children. This theme is related to research questions one and two because it addresses the responsibility of parents in their children's schooling and the connection between parents and the school authority.

4.4.7 Theme 7: Challenges Faced by the Principals

Mrs. Tunji is faced with poor parents' cooperation in enforcing discipline and correcting wrong behaviors in students. She explained that most of the students who engage in truancy and other bad behaviors come from broken homes, and efforts to reach the parents of such students are always futile. Mr. Famibi described some parents as being non-responsive to the plight and the needs of their children, which draws the efforts of the school in transforming the lives of such students. "One of the major challenges we have in the school is that some of these parents exhibit 'I don't care' attitude to the needs of their children and this is causing a lot of problems to the school in trying to help these students." This theme of challenges explained the efforts the school

administrators are making to be sure they get parents involved in the school affairs as much as possible, and this is related to my research question number two that is about the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children.

4.4.8 Theme 8: Expectations of the Principals

The policy of Mrs. Tunji is that students would perform very well if all stakeholders (i.e. parents, teachers, and students) fulfill their obligations. This is relevant to research question numbers one and two because this theme talks about the involvement of all stakeholders in promoting the education of children. Mrs. Tunji's expectations therefore are that teachers go to class to teach, they continually encourage students to attend classes to learn, and they counsel parents to provide the basic necessities for their children. Mr. Famibi's expectation is that he holds discussions with teachers to improve on their teaching methods, with students to be punctual in school, and with parents to be more committed to the education of their children. Quoting Mr. Famibi, he said, "As part of my expectations, I meet teachers regularly and discussed on the ways to improve their teaching methods. I expect students to come to school regularly and encourage parents to show more concern to their children's education." All the principals interviewed agreed that leading other teachers in the school environment, making sure there is smooth running in the affairs of the school, both administratively and academically, is a rewarding task.
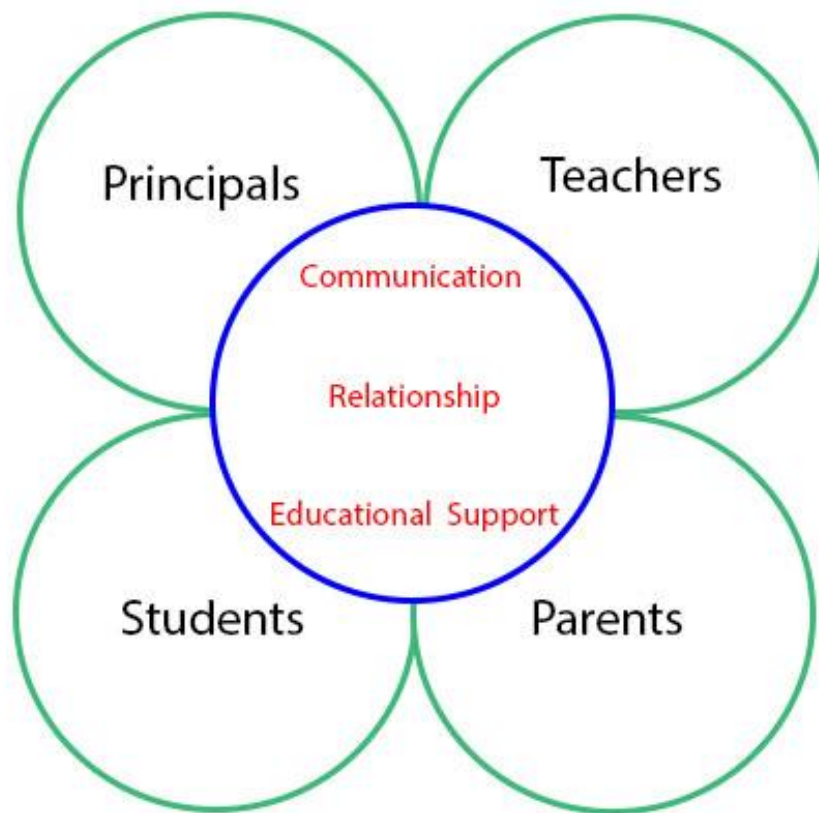
Figure 2 Common Themes of Interview Results

In summary, the common themes that ran across all the interview results of the students, parents, teachers, and principals are the themes of (1) communication between parents and students; between parents, students, and teachers; and between parents, students, teachers, and principals; (2) relationships between parents and students; between parents, students, and teachers; and between parents, students, teachers, and principals; and (3) educational support in all forms, particularly in the area of homework.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

My discussion focuses on (1) summary of the project's purpose, setting, and method; (2) summary of the project's results by research questions; (3) summary of conclusions from the study's results viz the study's goals and purpose; and (4) implications for theory, research, and practice.

5.1 Summary of the Project's Purpose, Setting, and Method

The aim of the project was to contribute to the understanding of the involvement of parents in their children's schooling among families in Nigeria. To achieve this goal, the study sought to understand the possible contributions of home and school factors influencing the academic performance of secondary school students in Lagos and in Ibadan, in the Oyo state of Nigeria. Home environmental factors are very essential in the early stage of a child's growth; this is because a child becomes a product of his or her environment. What a child learns to do and what kind of person he or she becomes depends in large part upon the learning opportunities he or she has.

The home environmental factor also determines children's school success. According to Idowu (1990), home environmental factors can be seen as those pertinent to where children live, which can enhance or retard their cognitive and affective academic achievement. The child's knowledge of the world he or she lives in enables him or her to arrive at interpretations of what his or her parents and other users of the language say to him or her and to one another. The learning environment also determines the quality and quantity of ordinary labels that the child can acquire; for example, working class children have little opportunity to engage in active language dialogue when learning with their parents.

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In addition to this, the presence or absence of parents at home also contributes greatly to children's educational outcomes in school, according to Makinde (2010). The consequence of the absence of parents from home is that it creates social problems of how to integrate these children from broken homes into a social group successfully in the larger community. The unavailability of both parents in the home brings social instability, and another negative consequence on children is that they develop an unstable personality. This is to reiterate the influence that family break-up has upon delinquent and deviant behaviors. How children construct their identities, either as individuals or as groups, is derived from meanings constructed from their social relations.

Another family factor that may be associated with children's school performance is the nature of family organization, that is, whether the family's processes involve democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire styles. Makinde (2010) argued that families based on controlled democracy are likely to produce children who are better behaved and higher achievers due to good parent-child relationships, as evidenced by discussion, supervision, and exemplary leadership at home. Family size also affects children's educational performance. Makinde (2010) noted that in a small family, a child is in close touch with his or her parents and habitually uses more adult language and ideas than he or she would do if lost in a crowd of siblings. It is also true that smaller families offer greater opportunities for performance, because it is easier to provide enough space, learning materials, e.g., books, and other resources, that aid learning than it is in a large family.

The home and the school most likely present different characteristics due to the kind of intellectual developmental opportunities offered. An example of such characteristics is the location of an educational institution. The settings of such locations, for example, either rural or

urban, have been proved to have effects on students' educational outcomes. Yoloye (2004) identified the effects of school location on resource provision for effective teaching and learning. He noted that the place where a school is located plays a vital role in determining the kind of educational opportunities offered. For example, schools situated in cities typically have better resources because highly qualified teachers prefer to live in cities, and more intellectual aiding materials are usually available to students. This is why, for example, that the location of schools in his study was dichotomized into urban and rural areas. The urban-rural dichotomy highlights the distinct features of each of the categories. Historically, rural settlement refers to areas with low population density, where the people are relatively homogenous in their values, attitudes, and behavior. The tempo of life is slower than the urban life, and with a fewer number of social amenities. In contrast, a settlement is regarded as urban if there is a concentration of social amenities and infrastructures in such areas. Urban areas are usually heterogeneous, consisting of people of different ethnic groups and professions.

Highlighting the impact of school location on student achievement, there is a difference in the degree of student educational expectations of those in urban and rural areas. This was evident in Okoyo's (2009) study, which indicated that the educational aspirations of rural youth lag behind those of their urban counterparts. He suggested that compared with urban students, rural students tend to have lower educational aspirations, and they have lower academic motivation. He found that learners in urban schools manifest more brilliant performance than their rural counterparts. He posited that since parents in rural areas often have a lower level of education, they might often attach a lower value to schooling. This is because this perceived lack of relevance for schooling may be enhanced by a rigid curriculum, meaning that rural schools can rarely adapt the curriculum to meet the local needs of the people. Even when parents in rural

areas place a value on schooling, they may be less able to help their children's learning since they have less ability to provide support for their children because of their own lack of knowledge.

Rural parents' own lack of knowledge shows how the factor of socio-economic status influences the impact of parental involvement in children's education among Nigerian families. The parents' lack of knowledge implies that they do not possess social capital, which is a contributing factor to children's success. Looking at how class affects economic and educational resources, Denga (1982) in his studies observed that the educational and socio-economic backgrounds of parents play a decisive role in the formation of student attitudes and habits toward schooling. He argued that it is true that social class does have a powerful impact in shaping the daily rhythms of families, and there is a wide socio-economic gap between middle class families and working class families due to differences in their status. In addition to social capital, middle class families have cultural capital, such as networking with other parents and making contact with school personnel, which helps them further understand the schooling process.

The above summary has indicated that the home environmental factor, the nature of family organization, family size, and the location of a school are all factors that affect student achievement. There is also the effect of class size on academic achievement. Ndukwu's (2006) study on resource provision and utilization in the pre-primary school suggested that the government should regulate class size in pre-primary schools to a maximum ratio of one teacher to 20 children. This is because the teacher-pupil ratio is a function of school population, and location influences resource utilization. Ndukwu (2006) revealed that when the ratio is high,

effective resource utilization is hindered, which in turn affects the amount of intellectual development bestowed on children.

The setting of the project was Nigeria. The study was carried out in two local government areas: Lagos and Ibadan, which is in the Oyo state of Nigeria. I was at two universities, the University of Lagos and the University of Ibadan, and at the following public and private mixed secondary schools, for data collection: St. Jude Secondary School, Early Life High School, Radiance Secondary School, C.L. Oyesina Model Secondary School, Monatan High School, Maverick College, and the International School, University of Ibadan. I focused on Senior Secondary School 1 and 2 (SS1 & 2) students. The rationale for the choice of these students is that they were not preparing for any final examination, like the SS3 students, during this study, and therefore they were less busy than the SS3 students.

Informal education in Nigeria, which is a multi-ethnic nation, carries significant importance in the sense that it is collective and social in nature. It is gradually and progressively implemented, and it reckons with the different stages of development. The Nigerian educational system, which influences parental abilities to impact and shape children's educational performance, could be restructured to allow for maximum parental participation by giving parents options about family involvement programs and the activities of school events.

The main method used for this study was qualitative field methods, using open-ended and face-to-face responsive interviewing for students, teachers, parents, guardians, and principals. Focus-group discussions and observations of family interactions through participant observation were additional methods of data collection used. A questionnaire was also used, but in a very limited way, and not extensively in the data presentation section. The limited use of the questionnaire in the data presentation section of this study was a result of the limited

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respondents' responses to the questionnaire that were received. I collected only five responses of the questionnaire, and this was not sufficient data collection. So, I decided not to use the questionnaire responses extensively in my presentation of data section. For the administration of the questionnaires, they were given to parents to fill out, and a follow-up of the parents was conducted to ascertain that they actually completed the questionnaires. The credibility of the tape-recorded and transcribed interviews was assumed by using triangulation, member-checking, and peer-debriefing. I employed a participant observation technique so as to develop rapport with research informants. My observation strategies focused on classroom interactions among teachers and students.

5.2 Summary of the Project's Results by Research Questions

My research questions were as follows:

Q.1: What do parents living in Lagos and Ibadan describe their roles to be in the education of their children, especially in their involvement with students' homework?

Q.2: In this context what do administrators, parents, and teachers describe as the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children? In what ways is this similar or different to how the literature describes these connections?

Q.3: What other factors contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's education, both at home and at school?

The discussion of my research questions, which includes a summary of the project's findings, highlights the importance of each research question, which I discuss as follows. The first research question highlighted that parents' role is very central to their children doing well in school. The rationale behind parents' involvement in education follows the reasoning that learning is most effective when there is a connection between school, home, and community.

Looking at the role parents play in the education of their children, social domain theory maintains that parents play an important role in the moral development aspect of the education of their children. Parents are concerned with maintaining appropriate social behavior and with facilitating the efficient functioning of the social interactions which provide the experiential basis for the construction of social knowledge. Parents are concerned with ensuring children's welfare and helping them learn how they ought to relate to others, Adewuyi (2002) reiterated. This is typical of the Nigerian context, in which the act of parenting is a shared responsibility. It is believed that when a child is born, the responsibility of raising the child does not belong only to the biological parents, but also to the members of the extended family, including aunty, uncle, brothers, and sisters.

This point corroborates my project results on the theme of "relationship," which I discussed in my data presentation of the themes in the parents' interview responses. Mr. Peters Anderson and Mr. Charles Obiora, who believe in the family values of social interactions, expressed how very close they are to their families. They reported having a cordial relationship with their wives and children. They developed a close relationship with their family members and control their behaviors by trying to explain rationally why they should behave or react in a desired manner. Mrs. Amarachi's approach and ability to monitor the television programs her children watched, due to their different cognitive abilities, support Adewuyi's (2002) argument that there is also an important cognitive component to parents' interactions with their children that may facilitate children's moral development. Parents can facilitate moral development by stimulating children to think reflectively about their actions. This suggests that reasoning, explanations, and rationales would be more effective in facilitating children moral development.

Looking at the results of the interview data collected, the parents interviewed expressed the idea that the role of parents in children's education cannot be over emphasized. This is why Mrs. Onome opined that parents should start where the teachers stop in school. Mrs. Chinwe Amarachi and Mr. Andrew explained that parents should complement the effort of the teachers in teaching children. For them, the role of parents should not stop in the payment of school fees, but should include cooperation with teachers in the teaching of their children. Barrister Enwereonu reported that the responsibility of the parents is to send their children to school, and secondly to get involved in teaching their children good morals so that they can behave well in society.

My project's findings about the characteristics and issues of parent involvement in my study's data presentation highlighted the theme of "family hood" in the principals' interview responses, within the context of principals' relationship with parents, students, and teachers. Mr. Famibi and Mrs. Tunji, in running the affairs of their schools, made conscientious efforts to build a community of family that was bound together in one unity in the school environment. This extended family system that they tried to build in the school culture was what Caldwell, Orubuloye, and Caldwell (1992) reiterated in their studies when they argued that the extended family system plays an important role in parents' participation in the education of their children. Parenting is a shared responsibility in the African setting; the responsibility for raising a child is a collective one. According to a Mende adage, "A child is not for one person" (Bledsoe, 1990). The interdependency and the harmonious interpersonal relations of family members seem to be common cultural values in African settings, and in Nigeria, to be more specific. The obligations of mothers and fathers extend not only to their shared biological children but also to their

children from other partners. African culture, and Nigeria specifically, embrace strong family life based on a long existing tradition which puts children and their caring as a top priority.

The second research question examined two related factors, which are the home and the school. In examining the interconnectedness between these two complementary factors, the majority of learning institutions are all working to bridge the space between families and education through different organizations in school, such as parent boards, PTO, and School Advisory Councils. My review of this question revealed to me two salient points. The first point explains the evidence that if there is no communication between home and school, there will be the problem of the failure of correspondence between home and school. If there is no effective communication between home and school, this will have a negative impact on student performance; standards of student performance will be low if there is no communication between the parents and the school, and it will affect the child's progress chart.

The evidence of the lack of correspondence between home and school culture highlighted some of the challenges to effective parental involvement I mentioned in my work, for example, communication barriers, language barriers, and logistic barriers or transportation problems. To a reasonable extent in this study, I have made the distinction between the perceptions of the home and school factors among those I studied in Ibadan and Lagos, and about the extent to which I included these home and school factors in my study's basic data collection and analysis.

The second point my review of the second research question revealed to me is that children in the school classroom come from diverse family environments, and this has favorable or backward effects on their academic achievement. The school culture is full of different cultural influences that help students to define who they are and how they act in the school environment. Due to the different cultural backgrounds of students, it might be difficult for

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teachers to develop a common learning environment that supports each student's learning objectives. To develop an understanding of students in a meaningful way, Adesina (2008) argued that a comprehensive understanding of the use of student language as a teachable resource and using students' learning methods to plan curriculum could contribute greatly to the related studies of home environment and students' academic achievement.

Due to the influence of cultural background on student achievement, what I learned from the findings of other researchers' studies is that the closer the home background of the child is to the school culture, the easier it is for the child to fit in properly into the school system. This is evident in Durojaiye (1987), who observed that for most African children, schooling is an activity to which it is hard to adjust. Missionaries, together with some elements of their culture, introduced western education into Nigeria. What has been discovered is that unless the two are well integrated, the cultural background of Nigerian students in most cases does not agree with the school. Thus, efforts should be directed towards bringing the two together for the purpose of the benefits to derive from western education.

My discussion of the parent-school relationship and its influence on school performance shows the need to create human relations among parents, students, and school authorities. This also shows the need to create human relations in both the home and the school environments. As parents establish relationships with school personnel, Hill and Craft (2003) argued that they learn important information about the school's expectations for homework; they learn how to help with homework, and how to augment children's learning at home. They further argued that parental school involvement during middle and high school is associated with an increase in the amount of time students spend on homework, and with an increase in the percentage of finished homework. Since parental involvement promotes positive educational experiences for children,

Hill and Craft (2003) talked about Head Start, the US's largest intervention program that emphasizes the importance of parental involvement as a critical feature of children's early academic development. They opined that parental-school involvement for young children is associated with early school success, including academics, language skills, and social competence.

Some factors that affect parents' school involvement are ethnicity and cultural background. Parental school involvement seems to function differently and serve different purposes in different ethnic and cultural groups, because parent-school relationships occur in community and cultural contexts (Hill & Taylor, 2004). For example, Adewuyi (2002) argued that there is a tendency for ethnic minorities groups of African descent, including Nigerian tribes whose primary language is not English, to be more involved in school related activities at home than at school. When parents have negative feelings about their own confidence in their own intellectual abilities, and in their interactions with their children, such negative feelings may hinder parents from making positive connections with their children's schools.

Parents' active intervention in structuring students' learning at home, for example, monitoring their engagements with the media, students discussing the challenges they face in their studies with their parents and guardians, and parents imbibing the democratic principles of family styles in their rearing practices, are findings of my project about the characteristics and issues of parent involvement in the regions I studied in Nigeria, and they may also be the case in other regions in Nigeria and in other regions in other African countries such as Malawi, Ghana, Republic of Benin, Tanzania, and Cote d'Ivoire. In the results of parents' interview responses gathered in this study, Mr. Amechi expressed the view that his children discuss the challenges they face at school with him on a regular basis, and he gives great support to them by

scrutinizing the programs they watch on television and what they are taught at school. Mr. Wole also expressed the same supportive opinion about his children's schooling. He always supports his children's schooling by arranging for extra moral classes for them. Mrs. Amara did not joke about the education of her children, but she does whatever she can to give her children the best education. She also admitted that her children discuss the challenges they face at school with her on a daily basis. Mr. Akin also monitors the television program his children watch at home, and he promises to support them to achieve the highest level in their chosen career.

The National Policy on Education encourages the participation of private and public agencies, including families and communities, in the management of schools. This mandate speaks directly to the Nigerian agendas of the democratization of schooling and citizen participation in public services, including education. The policy also makes the recognition of parental involvement the purview of Nigeria's education system. It presents an opportunity for the development of a form of parental involvement that meets the complex and multiple needs of contemporary society, in a more localized and engaged education system.

Looking at the roles of parents in their children's education, some of the parents interviewed in this study were generally aware of the important role they have to play in the provision of education. For example, Mrs. Onome, Mrs. Ayorinde, Mr. Andrew, and Mr. Amechi expressed the belief that effective community participation will not only give pupils a sense of belonging, but also bring pupils closer to their community, help foster cooperation between the school and the community, and help all to cater to the needs of society. It is therefore necessary that communities and families must be aware of the important role they have to play in the development of the school. This underscores the importance of communication in community

participation. If adequate information is provided to people, they should be more likely to participate actively in decision-making that affects their living condition.

Parents' participation in school management provides them with opportunities to collaborate with schools. Koros, et al. (2009) argued that there is a positive impact on the teaching and learning process when parents are active, and when there are frequent contacts between parents and school administration in improving school financial accountability. The involvement of parents in school management provides opportunities to both parents and teachers to discuss and negotiate effective ways of improving their children's education standard. Parents are the closest people to their wards, and therefore they have better understanding of students' behaviors and needs. Their participation in school management helps to improve students' welfare and performance in schools.

My discussion of the roles of parents in their involvement with students' homework is that home resources in terms of the quality and quantity of goods the family can offer predict early literacy skills that include language competence. This finding is consistent with the view of Agunlanna (2007) that adults can effectively intervene to support children's learning when they develop a shared language skill. Implicit in this view is the importance of language, which is an element of one's cultural identity. Its roles include people's daily experiences, their way of thinking, and their worldviews. Nigeria, which comprises more than four hundred ethnic groups, has three major ethnic languages: Yoruba (spoken in the western region), Igbo (spoken in the eastern region), and Hausa (spoken in the northern region). Through their languages, Nigerians express their values and belief system. As a teacher and learner of a language, the need is to learn that these languages promote social integration and globalization on the part of the speaker.

Adesina (1982) argued that globalization offers us great opportunities to strengthen our language skills and enhance our social status. The social class in which individuals belong determines the level of language at which they speak. The language of the middle class parents in terms of how they intervene in their children's affairs in school is different from the language of the working class parents, in the sense that the former are more interventionist in the process than the latter. Aghenta (2010) argued that change, a social cultural factor, is synonymous with national development. Our nation is rapidly changing technologically in its educational, political, and economic circles. Technology development in terms of information technology has had a great impact on globalization. Many people can now interact both locally and internationally with the use of cell phones and the internet. Technology developments have now become the greatest change agent of this 21st century and a progressive determining growth factor of our nation, individuals, and communities.

My study proposed that the home environment is a determining factor of the child's attitude towards language in doing homework. The utilization of language skills is to enable students to maintain a conversation with school personnel and parents. Looking at the centrality of language in parent involvement in students' homework, it is a mark of social mobility for high socio-economic status parents. The belief is that the attitude of parents in relation to the promotion of language skills for low socio-economic status parents has been on the decline. From the parents' interview responses, the parents (for example, Mrs. Nwokija, Barrister Enwereonu, Mrs. Onome, and Mr. Olarenwaju) reported that, apart from the English language, they used their ethnic languages Yoruba and Igbo to explain their children's homework to them at home, and this has been very helpful to them.

My data from the parents' interviews supports the findings of scholars like Okunola (2003) and Nord, et al. (2004), who in their studies showed that parents of high socio-economic status demonstrate richer home literacy environments for students' homework than do parents of low socio-economic status. This is because they found that home resources predict early literacy skills. While higher SES parents tend to exhibit warmth and are more involved in their child's life and value the child's self-direction, lower SES parents tend to focus on maintaining control, order, and obedience from children. Low- income families, who lack economic resources, are limited in the quality and quantity of goods that the family can provide their children.

A study by Armstrong and Labercane (2010), on the meaning of the vocabulary of children, affirmed that the child's attitude towards language in doing homework appears to be a function of the life style of the home environment. For parents to be able to enter into a meaningful dialogue about their children's homework, Armstrong and Labercane (2010) suggested that it is critically important that children develop a shared language with parents. Using a shared language can help to discuss the ways in which children learn and how adults can effectively intervene to support and extend children's learning. When adults intervene, they argued that the adults adopt a particular pedagogical approach, and this approach is underpinned by a particular philosophy, which is that early childhood educators are interactionists. They base their interventions on careful observations of the children. They spend time watching children, and they work alongside the child to support and extend their learning. They teach skills when appropriate. In summary, this research question views the involvement of parents as a key variable driving educational attainment, and it demonstrates that the more parents get more involved in their children's learning, the greater the child's educational accomplishments, especially through homework, are likely to be.

For the third research question, I focused on three factors that research has outlined that contribute to high and low parental involvement in children's education. These factors are 1. parents' positive sense of efficacy for helping children; 2. parental stress and depression, and 3. parents' own experiences. My discussion in this section highlights that parents' belief in their ability to help their child with school work gives students the encouragement to complete their academic tasks. In determining learning outcomes, parents with a high sense of efficacy are able to create learning content and to tailor it exactly to what the students need. Viewing the Nigerian context, according to Ajayi (2013), many parents express a sense of efficacy, which is evident in their daily engagement with their children. They express the belief and the confidence that they want to be involved and to make a positive difference in their children's lives; although they might have some challenges, they still keep striving higher. Although some parents might have faced some challenges during their own schooling days, they try to make sure these did not affect their children's schooling experiences. Looking at the high expectations from parents in terms of making the family comfortable, some of these parents go the extra mile by doing two or three jobs daily just to make sure that they are able to cope with the family responsibility. This shows some of the challenges facing Nigerian parents in terms of the economic situation of the country.

Looking at the Nigerian context, according to Adesina (2008), the cultural factors of parenting are seen as a serious issue in Nigeria and serve as a bedrock for the development of the Nigerian child. Parents who impose their views and likings on their children may inadvertently draw upon the self-efficacy of the child. The dynamism and complexity of the effects of social interactions that occur in the family have influence on the self-efficacy of parents. Highlighting the cultural element, who determines self-efficacy? The communal sense of Nigerian parents is the determining factor. They value a sense of oneness, which is a very important factor. Parents

also experience stress and depression, which come up as a result of their trying to meet their family responsibilities. As I have already mentioned, some parents do two or three jobs just to meet up with the family demands.

For Dempsey, et al. (1992), parents' sense of efficacy means a sense of personal competence, and that a parent believes that he or she has the skill and knowledge necessary to help his or her child's academic improvement, for example, in helping to improve their children's homework. Thus, parents with a higher sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed are likely to believe that their involvement will make a positive difference for the child. Parents with a low sense of efficacy, on the other hand, are likely to avoid involvement because of their belief that the involvement will not produce positive outcomes for themselves or their child. A sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school enables the parent to act in relation to his or her child's schooling and to persist in the face of difficulties that may emerge in the course of helping the child succeed in school.

The higher the sense of efficacy of parents, the greater are their efforts, persistence, and resilience. High self-efficacy helps create feelings of peacefulness in approaching difficult activities or tasks. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy may believe that things are tougher than they really are, because of their belief that promotes a narrow vision of how best to solve a problem. Thus for the above scholars, self-efficacy directly influences academic achievement through cognition, and it indirectly affects perseverance. They suggested that lower student achievement could affect parents' level of efficacy beliefs, causing discouragement for further involvement. Individuals with high self-efficacy attempt challenging tasks more often, persist longer at them, and exert more effort. This is because, as I argued about Bandura (1995), self-efficacy beliefs help determine how much effort people will expend on an activity, how long

they will persevere when faced with challenges, and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situations. Looking at the causal effect of this efficacy relationship, Bandura (1995) argued that in a similar way parents who reflect lower self-efficacy are more likely to be disengaged in promoting parenting strategies, which in turn decreases the likelihood for their children's success in both academic and social psychological domains. Lower self-efficacy parents, who feel less confident in their abilities to parent successfully, may be quick to use harsh parenting practices that might escalate into abuse, because mothers with lower levels of perceived control over caregiving failure have been found to be more abusive and to use more coercive parenting.

Parental stress and depression can have adverse effects on parents' dispositions toward their children, which ultimately affects student achievement and possibly leads to dysfunctionalities in the family system, according to Bornstein and Zlotnik (2008). This dysfunctionality leads to psychological and emotional problems in the child. My examination of this topic also highlighted that stress is part of our everyday living in the family and in the work environment. Therefore, we cannot get rid of stress, but we can adopt a positive strategy to cope adequately with a stressful life, for example by building a social network in the workplace. Implicit in this view is to understand how stress and depression impact the learning process. We know that students do not learn in a vacuum. Rather, their education is impacted by economic, social, and political worldviews. This then means that the sociocultural contexts of the learning environment in which the student grows up, and his or her psychological development, are contributing factors that determine student success, both at home and at school.

Bornstein and Zlotnik (2008) argued that parental stress and depression often negatively affect parenting and how they help with homework. They can have potentially damaging effects

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on parents' attitudes and behaviors toward children. Parental stress can reduce parental participation in helping their child with homework, and in attentiveness, patience, and tolerance toward children, and it can increase the use of punitive practices. All these can negatively affect children's social competence. Their studies also indicated that depression is often characterized by increased negative social cognitions and negative attributions. For example, depressed parents demonstrate a style of interaction marked by intrusiveness, anger, irritation, hostility, anxiety, and rough handling of their kids. They display limited amounts of nurturing and are less responsive to their child's needs, both emotional and academic. They suggested that depressed parents' negative attributions about their children's behavior are associated with harsh parenting practices, which potentially result in the development of psychological problems for the child.

Apart from depression, parents' own experiences also affect parents' school involvement. As parents shape their children's schooling, the parents' memories of his or her own school experiences may influence how the parent interprets and directs the child's school experiences. Memories of supportive school experiences are likely to enhance parents' involvement and comfort in interacting with the child's school. Gibson, et al. (2004) argued that some parents may remain disconnected from their child's schooling, whether because of past school failure, family life circumstances related to financial stress, or other crises. Thus, some parents will be unable to respond to invitations for involvement.

In the interview results, parents from the field shared their educational experiences as follows:

Mrs. Vera had a positive experience attending primary and secondary education in a mission school. As a day student, she attended a government university for her tertiary education. She reported that she got support from her family when she was in school. She knew

the value of family support from relatives and friends, and this she extended to her own children's schooling.

Mrs. Nweze went to day primary school and a military secondary school, where she received a lot of discipline. She reported that she had a lot of support from friends and the community for her education. She was able to share this idea of community sharing with members of her family in the areas of their education. With her own positive experience of schooling, she also learned to support her kids in their education. Mrs. Aremu reported that her educational background was solid and splendid, and that she passed through school and did not allow the school to pass through her. She promised to give the level of supports she received from her parents to her children.

The third research question addressed how parents' sense of efficacy, parental stress and depression, and parents own experience contribute to high and low parent involvement in children's education. The next section provides a summary of conclusions from the study's results.

5.3 Summary of Conclusions from the Study's Results

This study was undertaken in an effort to gain an understanding of what parental participation in children's schooling looks like in the regions that I studied in Nigeria. My conclusion, based on my project results, is that parental involvement is a very important area of research and practice among families in Nigeria. Thus, the study shows an understanding of parental positive practices in Nigeria. However, based on insufficient data, there are additional questions that I should have asked that were not asked earlier. For example, my study's results on parent involvement in the area of homework show that working class parents were very much interested in getting involved in helping their children with homework, but they did not have the

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cultural capital, which the middle class parents have. For example, the middle class parents can afford to get a lesson teacher for their children, to help them improve in their schoolwork. Working class parents in most cases do not have the means to go extra miles to invest in their children's schooling. However, this does not mean that working class parents do not value education as much as middle class parents do.

My conclusion also shows that when parents, teachers, principals, and the rest of school personnel collaboratively work together to support students' learning, these children tend to stay longer on task. Their academic outcome improves. They tend to develop good work habits, a positive academic attitude, and lifelong learning skills, such as time management, coping, and persistence. When school interests families in manners that improve learning and support parent involvement at home and at school, there is improvement in student learning outcomes.

This conclusion also highlights that parents' role in the education of their children is very important to their performance in school. The reason behind parents' involvement in their children's education follows the reasoning that learning is most effective when there is a connection between school, home, and community. When schools are able to initiate collaboration with families, they are able to maintain relationships that focus on improving student outcomes. This is particularly relevant to Nigeria.

Looking at the involvement of parents that has supported the effort of parental engagement with schools and students in Nigeria, the conclusion from the research data is that although parents want to be involved in their children's education, they are not fully committed in all ramifications of involvement, especially in the area of curriculum development and designing the school program. The emphasis of education on parents' and community involvement in the provision of basic education was very clear on this.

The findings from my data presentation imply that parents are more involved in parenting, followed by communication, and they assist with learning at home. Given what I learned from my data collection site in Nigeria, and looking at my themes in the parents' interview responses, the parents expressed that education is very important to them because it opens many doors of opportunities.

A major limitation of the study is that   the study's conclusions are limited to Lagos and Ibadan, given that these study sites are both large urban parts of South West Nigeria. However, as part of future research that needs to be followed up, it would be good to do a similar study in Eastern and Northern Nigeria; and in some similar African countries like Ghana, Tanzania, and Malawi, just to mention a few because of the similarity in cultural backgrounds.

5.4 Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

Based on the insufficient data that gave rise to more questions that should have been asked, this study needs more areas to be investigated. For example, there is the need to interview more principals in future research. Most of the studies gathered information from parents and school personnel, but my study also included students' perceptions of their parent involvement in their schooling. My suggestion is that more studies should include more sources of data, in order to get broader perspectives on this issue of parental involvement. The findings from this study provide information for theory, practice, and further research concerning parental involvement.

I have argued that because today's knowledge economy stresses not just qualifications but more importantly practical skills, school systems need to include in their curricula transformational and responsive pedagogy which promotes imaginative, cognitive, and emotional intelligence in students if they are to be responsive to the needs of today's learners, who are active participants in the learning process. This is because education is more concerned

with helping individuals grow in the all-around sense of development and positive change in behavior.

Looking at the Nigerian context, the reasons for this gap between theory and practice are as follows: First, we are sure that societal values are no longer static. School curricula are still planned around fixed subjects such as math, English, and science. They have not been planned based on the broader perspective of meeting the current peoples' needs and the challenges of daily living. Second, there seems to be the inability of the curriculum to help children learn to define their needs in practical contexts. Third, there is the growing concern that the average Nigerian's attitude to work generally leaves much to be desired. The schooling system has not been successful in emphasizing the individual value and culture of work.

For practice, I am suggesting that the government should make sure that the school curriculum addresses the practical concerns of the individual student. The school curriculum must have its practical component of meeting the needs of the students in addressing their daily challenges of life. The curriculum should also be structured in a way to inculcate in the students the value of work. The current subject school curriculum seems to be too academically focused on examinations rather than meeting the practical needs of the students. Finally, the curriculum should be structured in a way that it will help the students in differentiating between their needs and their wants.

The implications for practice correspond with my conclusion on why parents are not fully committed in the area of curriculum development, because the curriculum is too theoretical without much practical applications. The data that specifically entail this suggestion is found in the teachers' interview section under theme four, titled "challenges the teachers face in their teaching profession." The teachers expressed that one of the two most important challenges they

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face in their teaching career is the problem of the theoretical applications of the curriculum, as opposed to practical skills and involvement. Mr. Aremu, who teaches in a state school, lamented that the curriculum is more theoretical than practical, which denies students the ability to adapt the mathematical theories to real life applications.

The study indicates that the Nigerian educational system does not provide sufficient necessary skills for students after graduation. As a recommendation for future studies, I would like research to be done with emphasis on the objectives of education that should be preparing individuals for practical living within society, and motivating students with a need for achievement and self-improvement, both in school and in later life. This also means that the subject about school curriculum should be restructured to meet the daily challenges of the individuals' needs.

Coupled with the schedule of the curriculum is the issue of the academic environment; the Ministry of Education should make sure that the environment of the school is conducive to learning. This is because meaningful teaching and learning can only take place in a suitable environment. In addition, there is the issue of accommodation; the government should make sure that the buildings are carefully constructed so that the size of the classroom is spacious enough for students, and that the arrangement of the infrastructures is laid out well and comfortably for effective classroom instruction.

Another issue to look at is the quality of teachers. The Ministry of Education should look into the criteria of allocating teachers in classrooms. It should also look into the effect of class sizes on teacher's allocation. There should be assurance that the teacher in the classroom has the content knowledge of the subject he or she is teaching. The goal is that the more the teacher has

control of the subject, the more support there is for students and the improvement of their outcomes.

Finally, an issue to consider is the fact that due to the variations of culture that are brought to the classroom, educators need to be aware of ethnic, class, and gender differences in the classroom. Educators need to recognize that parenting styles differ from one culture to another, and exist within a complexity of categories. Therefore, educators should hold high expectations for all, regardless of culture.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PARENTS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Family:

1. Tell me about yourself, including your place of birth, date of birth, level of education, income level, where educated, religion, language (s) spoken, where you live – city, village, rural, or urban area.

2. Tell me about your family – including numbers of children, boys/girls, ages of the children; tell me about your relationships with your children.

3. How important is it to you to support your children? What kind of support do you give your children in regard to their education?

4. Describe your childrearing practices according to your cultural background. Tell me about what attributes you think are the most important in raising children in your household and why. How does this attribute (s) contribute to their educational performance?

5. Tell me about how you discipline your children.

6. Could you tell me something about the cultural practices being practiced in your household? Including clothing, food, dance, art, etc.

7. Describe a typical day interaction in your household. Who does what? What are the chores the children are supposed to perform before and after school? Are the chores assigned according to age, or gender, or in general? What are the activities that you and your children do together? Who is the disciplinarian in the household?

8. How does your family get along with each other? How close do you think the relationships are in your family?

9. What do you believe are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of your family?

10. What part of the culture do you want your children to continue with? What part do you not want them to continue with?

Education:

1. Tell me something about your educational experiences, including your level of education.

2. Did you attend private or public school in Nigeria? Did you attend day or boarding school? What kind of support did you get from your relatives, friends, community?

3. How important is education to you? How comfortable are you with the system?

4. Tell me something about your children's education – aspirations, goals, how well they are performing in school, where they are attending school.

5. What are your expectations about your children's educational performance? Are your expectations the same for both boys and girls? Do you expect certain professions for girls rather than the boys? Any conflicts between your expectations for them and their own expectations? How do you expect them to fulfill your expectations, and what actions are you taking to enable them to reach their potential?

6. What is the highest level of education you want your children to achieve? Do you find yourself telling your children what kind of profession you want them to do in the future?

7. What kind of support do you provide your children in regard to their education? How involved are you before school, after school, as a PTA member? What time do you spend on homework? Is there somebody at home when they come back from school? Do they discuss the challenges they face in school with you?

8. What do you think is the role of parents in educating children?

9. What do you think is the role of schools in educating children?

10. What do you see other parents do in the education of their children?

11. What is your understanding of education and schooling?

12. What is the school's expectation for your involvement in your child's education?

13. Do you visit your child's school? How often?

14. Does the school know about your child's home activities?

Social Activities:

1. Where do you currently live? How comfortable are you in your current neighborhood?

2. What medium of communication exists within your community? Word of mouth, community meetings, newspapers?

3. Are you a member of any ethnic group? (Yoruba Association, Hausa Association, Nigerian Community organization, etc.) How important is it for you to be a member?

4. What kind of benefit do you achieve for being a member?

5. Are you a member of an ethnic religious group? How often do you attend services?

6. How involved are you in the organization and in the activities?

7. Do you participate in any of your community festivities, such as naming ceremony, national day, weddings, etc?

8. Are your children involved in the organization?

APPENDIX B

STUDENTS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Family:

1. Describe your family for me. What kind of support does your family provide for you?

2. What are the cultural traditions and beliefs practices in your home? How do you think these practices affect your education? Is there any conflict regarding cultures in your household?

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your family?

4. How does your family get along with one another?

5. Describe your relationship with your parent.

6. Tell me about the community you live in. Describe your involvement with the community. Does this involvement help or hinder your education?

7. Do you think the way you are being raised in your home helps you with the challenges you face in school?

8. Are your parents' religious? Does their involvement in religion help you in your education?

9. Do your parents discipline you at home? What kind of discipline do you receive? Do you get punished if you don't perform well at school?

10. What kinds of chores are assigned at home? Are there different chores according to age, gender, etc?

11. What language do you communicate most with at home with your parents? How many language(s) can you speak?

Education:

1. Tell me something about yourself in regard to your education. Your goals, aspirations, expectations, grades, challenges faced in school, the type of extracurricular activities in which you are involved in school, sports, acting, drama, spelling bee, etc.

2. How do your parents support you with your education? Do they participate in school activities? Belong to PTA? Do they help you with your school work, and who helps the most (mother/father)? Are they at home with you after school? How much time do you and your parents spend together after school?

3. Tell me about the school you attend – is it a day or a boarding school? Did you attend a private or a public school?

4. How far do you want to go in your education?

5. Are your parents' educational expectations the same for you and your siblings (brothers/sisters) in terms of your educational performance?

Social Activities:

1. Do you or your parents belong to any (ethnic) organization? What kind of organization? What is your level of involvement? What do you or your parents contribute to the organization? What are the reasons for joining?

2. In what way, if any, do you feel that these organizations benefit you in your school performance?

3. How often do you participate in your community activities, such as weddings, funerals, national day celebrations, etc., and at what level?

Ending Question:

What else would you like us to know about you?

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Please tell me about yourself.

2. Please tell me about your work. What do you do? What do you usually do on a typical
   day? Simply put, describe a typical day at work.

3. How do you feel about your work? What do you like most and least about your work?

4. What are some of the reasons you feel that being a principal is desirable?

5. Please describe your relationships with your teachers.

6. How would you describe your relationships with your students?

7. Please tell me about the parents – how would you describe your relationships with them?

8. Focusing on the things you do, how do you encourage effective parent involvement in
   their children's education?

9. What are the challenges you experience in your effort to promote parent involvement in
   their children's education?

10. As the principal, what is your expectation of the current academic school year's
    involvement with teachers, students, and parents?

APPENDIX D

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself, your educational and professional backgrounds.

2. Why did you choose to become a teacher?

3. What has been your most positive and negative teaching experience?

4. What grade do you enjoy teaching the most?

5. What do you think is the role of schools in promoting parental involvement?

6. In what ways do you consider the attitude of teachers as promoting or inhibiting parental involvement?

7. How do you describe the connection between home and school in promoting the education of children?

8. What do you see as the biggest challenge teaching the students?

Students:

9. What are your expectations for your students?

10. Discuss your experience working with students.

11. Describe a positive experience working with a diverse population of students.

12. How do you help students experience success?

13. How do you determine each individual child's potential?

14. How will you establish and maintain relationships with students, including those with challenging behaviors?

15. What do you do to support students with special needs in your classroom?

Parents:

16. What kind of relationship do you want to foster with the parents of your students?

17. What do you consider is the role of parents in promoting the education of children?

18. How often do you communicate with parents?

19. What is the most efficient way to communicate with parents?

20. Describe the circumstances you would contact a parent.

21. How do you plan to involve parents in their children's learning?

Ending Question:

What else would you like us to know about you?

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Family:

1. Discuss about yourself, including your place of birth, level of education, your income level, where you were educated, your religion, language spoken, where you live – city, village, rural, or urban area.

2. Tell us about your family – including numbers of children (boys / girls), ages of the children; tell us about your relationships with your children.

3. Discuss how important it is to you to support your children in regard to their education. What kind of support do you give them?

4. Describe your child rearing practices according to what you believe, based on your cultural background, e.g., tell us about what attributes you think are the most important in raising children in your household and why? How does this attribute (s) contribute to their educational performance?

5. Tell us about how you discipline your children. Who is the disciplinarian in the household?

6. Discuss about the cultural practices being practiced in your household, including clothing, food, dance, art, etc.

7. Describe a typical day interaction in your household. Who does what? What are the chores the children are supposed to perform before and after school? Are the chores assigned according to age, gender, or generally? What are the activities that you and your children do together?

8. Discuss how your family gets along with each other. How close do you think the relationships are in your family?

9. Tell us what you believe are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of your family.

10. What part of the culture do you want your children to continue with? What part do you not want them to continue with?

Education:

1. Discuss your educational experiences, including your level of education. Tell us if you attended private or public school in Nigeria, and if it was a day or a boarding school.

2. What kind of support did you get from your relatives, friends, and community?

3. How important is education to you? Discuss the various forms of assistance (if any) you have offered the school your child attends. What are your views on the general response to the call on parents' participation in the affairs of the school, e.g., volunteering at school?

4. How comfortable are you with the current educational system?

5. Discuss your children's education – their goals; how well they are performing in school; where they are currently attending school.

6. What are your expectations about your children's educational performance? Any conflicts between your expectations for them and their own expectations? What actions are you taking to enable them to reach their potential?

7. Tell us the highest level of education you want your children to achieve. Do you find yourself telling your children what kind of profession you want them to do in future?

8. Discuss the kind of support you provide your children in regard to their education. How involved are you before school and after school? Are you a PTA member? Tell us what

time you spend on homework with your child. Do they discuss challenges they face in school with you?

9. What role do you think parents play in the education of their children?

10. Tell us what you think is the role of schools in educating children.

11. Discuss the difference in your understanding between education and schooling.

12. How often do you visit your child's school (if you do)?

Social Activities:

1. Tell us how comfortable you are where you currently live. What medium of communication exists within your community? – Word of mouth, community meetings, newspaper, etc.?

2. Are you a member of any group, e.g., any association or town group meetings? How important is it for you to be a member? What kind of benefit do you get for being a member?

3. Are you a member of any religious group? How often do you attend services?

4. Discuss how involved you are in the organization and in the activities.

5. Discuss if you participate in any of your community festivities, such as naming ceremony, birthday celebrations, weddings, national day celebrations, etc.

6. Are your children involved in these community festivities

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parent,

This is an instrument designed to get information from parents on their involvement in their children's education. You have been considered as one of those whose opinion will be of benefit to this study. So, please be honest in providing useful information as required.

The information provided will be strictly used for research work only. All information supplied will be strictly kept in confidence. Your cooperation will be high appreciated.

Thank you.

Section A

Name ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Name of child/ward ……………………………………………………………………….

Instruction: Tick (√) as applicable

A.   Highest educational qualification

1.   No formal school   (   )

2.   Primary six certificate   (   )

3.   SC/GCE/O/L   (   )

4.   ACE/NCE/Grade II   (   )

5.   OND/HND   (   )

6.   First degree   (   )

7.   Masters/PhD   (   )

8.   Others (Specify) …………………………………………………………………

B.   What is your occupation? …………………………………………………………..

C.   Marital Status

          a. Married with spouse (living with husband or wife (wives)   (   )

          b. Single – Parent (living alone)   (   )

D.   **How many wives do you have?** …………………………………………..

E.   **How many children do you have altogether?** …………………………………

How many boys?................................. How many girls? …………………………..

Do you have a child/children in junior secondary school class(es)? Yes (   ) No (   )

How many? …………………………………………………

Do you have other relative's child (children) that you are responsible for their schooling?

Yes (   )   No (   )

If yes, how many?

F.   **On the average, what is the income (per month)?** …………………………..

G.   **If you do not receive salary, how much do you take home per day?** ………

Section B: Parents' general assessment of their involvement in their children education

S/N	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My primary concern about my child's education is only the payment of school fees.				
2	The son belongs to the mother, therefore it is not father's responsibility to look after the child's education.				
3	Since the school has a library, it is not necessary I purchase books for my child/children.				
4	I have not been visiting my child's/children's school to find out factors affecting his/her/their learning.				
5	I have not been assisting my child to tackle problems on his/her school work at home.				
6	I have not been checking my child's/children's school work at home.				
7	I do not ask my child/children about his/her/ their performances in his/her/their school work when he/she/they get home.				
8	There is no need to employ privately paid teachers for my child/children because there are teachers in his/her school.				

Section C: Perception of parents on their involvement in providing basic education

Please tick (√) as applicable

S/N	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Provision of basic education should be government's sole responsibility .				
2	There is no need to check children's school work at home.				
3	Fund raising for school's development should be parents' responsibility.				
4	Parents should provide funds for school running for the benefit of their wards.				
5	Parents' involvement in wards' education can influence children positively.				
6	There are more personal problems to be solved than providing basic education for one's child.				
7	There is the need to take the education of children seriously.				
8	Funds provided by the government should be sufficient to run each school.				
9	Students' performance depends on how the parents support it.				
10	Concerned parents should not wait for government to provide basic needs for their children to go to school.				
11	If the parent should help in the provision of necessary school materials, students' performance will be better.				
12	Supply of furniture should be left to the government alone.				
13	Teachers alone are capable to influence children's academic performance.				
14	The importance I place on education makes me participate in providing education.				
15	The gender of the child is important to me				
16	The female child should be given equal opportunity with the male child in education.				
17.	The male child should be educated.				

Section D: Parents' expectations of their child's performance

How far do you expect your child to go in education?

i.   Finish junior school level   (   )

ii.   Finish senior school level   (   )

iii.   Obtain diploma certificate   (   )

iv.   Obtain degree   (   )

v.   Finish Master's degree   (   )

vi.   Finish PhD/MD or other advanced degree   (   )

Section E: Parenting

S/N	Statement	Never	Less Frequently	Frequently	More Frequently
1	Buy books for home's library.				
2	Provide conducive environment for learning at home, e.g., study room with good table and chair.				
3	Provide first aid box at home.				
4	Provide medical treatment when child is sick.				
5	Provide textbooks.				
6	Provide good nourishing meals for my child.				
7	Provide adequate clothing for all weather for my children.				
8	Provide school materials, e.g., uniform, school bag, shoe, etc.				

Section F: Communicating

S/N	Activities: As a parent I talk to my child's teacher(s) about	Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
1	homework .				
2	students' behaviour in class.				
3	areas for improvement.				
4	assessment tests.				
5	work missed because of absences.				
6	Discipline.				
7	help with work in students' weak areas.				
8	his/her relationship with friends.				

Section G: Volunteering at school

S/N	Activities: As a parent I	Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
1	help in the classroom to teach a subject.				
2	help with special events, e.g, end of the year programme.				
3	help the school to do some photocopies of materials.				
4	help with set-up/clean-up at functions e.g. decoration of venue.				
5	help to plan school trips for my child.				
6	help to provide transportation.				
7	help in fund raising activities.				
8	help to go on class trips with my child.				

Section H: Learning at home

S/N	Activities: As a parent I help my children at home	Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
1	with homework.				
2	with reading together.				
3	with school projects.				
4	to check homework/assignments				
5	by teaching one or more lessons/topics at home.				
6	help with study to comprehend.				
7	give supplementary work at home.				
8	by monitoring progress through scores.				
9	help in the organization of time (keep a regular morning and bedtime schedule).				
10	by hiring a teacher/tutor.				
11	review school work before examinations.				
12.	help to connect school work with life experiences.				

Section I: Participate in decision making

S/N	Activities: As a parent I	Never	Less Frequently	Frequently	More frequently
1	support school authority in decision making.				
2	provide advisory talk when necessary at home.				
3	help with fundraising.				
4	hold an office or position on the disciplinary committee.				
5	a member of the building committee.				
6	help to implement rules and regulations of the school.				
7	have a leadership role in the school				
8	help to write letters to parents .				

Section J: Parent's activities outside of home

S/N	Activities: As a parent I participate with my children in	Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
1	field trips .				
2	museums/art/exhibition .				
3	watching drama or plays outside the home.				
4	visiting historical sites, e.g., Badagry Slavery village, Olumo rock etc.				
5	physical education e.g. sport .				
6	watching musical concerts.				
7	visiting parks/garden e.g. zoo.				
8	watching festival.				
9	visiting places of interest e.g. airport, tourist centre etc.				
10	camping .				

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